JKM LIBRARY
BX5939.E64
Creeds and loyalty : essays on the histo
3 9968 02642 2462

ACCESSION NUMBER SHELF NUMBER

Library
of
Lane Seminary
Affiliated with
The Presbyterian
Theological Seminary
Chicago
826 Belden Avenue

CREEDS AND LOYALTY

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO · DALLAS
ATLANTA · SAN FRANCISCO

MACMILLAN & CO., LIMITED
LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN CO. OF CANADA, LTD.
TORONTO

CREEDS AND LOYALTY

Essays on the History, Interpretation, and Use of the Creeds

BY

SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY
OF THE EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL,
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

LANE SEMINARY LIBRARY,
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1924

All rights reserved

COPYRIGHT, 1924,
BY THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.

Set up and electrotyped.
Published May, 1924.

Printed in the United States of America by
THE FERRIS PRINTING COMPANY, NEW YORK.

BX
5939
E 64

To

EDWARD STAPLES DROWN

OUR TEACHER AND COLLEAGUE

90402

PREFACE

While the authors of the following chapters are in general agreement, each writer is responsible only for the opinions expressed in his own essay.

The book is an attempt to present certain considerations, familiar to scholars, which seem to us important in the light of contemporary discussion. We recognize that, as a result, our first corporate volume occasionally strikes the controversial note, and lays emphasis upon the negative aspects of the problems considered.

It is hoped that the reader will keep in mind the occasion and purpose of the book, and that he will not be in haste to reach conclusions which the text does not warrant. We do not ask assent. We do ask dispassionate consideration. We would welcome vigorous and stimulating disagreement. As men devoted to the Church of which we are members and within which we find our freedom, we are striving constantly to enter more deeply into the meaning of our Lord's life and to find in the Living Christ the solution of the mystery of God and man. We are trying to consecrate ourselves to the service of our Church, that in its teaching and in its formularies, it may give more sensitive expression to the truth as it is in Jesus. We hope that at some future time and in a more positive way we may discuss other aspects of the Faith.

We have not had the counsel and coöperation of our colleague, Edward Staples Drown. He is on leave of absence in the Orient during the academic year 1923–24.

Cambridge, Massachusetts,
March 18, 1924.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

I. The History of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds 1
By James Arthur Muller
Professor of Church History

II. Liturgies and Creeds 23
By Henry Bradford Washburn
Dean and Professor of Church History

III. The Scriptures and the Apostles' Creed, with Special Reference to the Birth of Christ . 45
By William Henry Paine Hatch
Professor of the Literature and Interpretation of the New Testament

IV. The Virgin Birth and Belief in Christ . . . 65
By Angus Dun
Assistant Professor of Systematic Divinity

V. The Resurrection of the Body 93
By Samuel McComb
Professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology

VI. Honesty and the Creeds 123
By Norman Burdett Nash
Assistant Professor of the Literature and Interpretation of the New Testament

VII. The Creed as a Test of Church Membership . 151
By James Thayer Addison
Assistant Professor of the History of Religion and Missions

I

THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTLES' AND NICENE CREEDS

By

James Arthur Muller

SYNOPSIS

I. The Apostles' Creed an expansion of the Old Roman Creed known in the second century. This an expansion of a simpler baptismal formula. Reasons for this expansion. Original meaning of certain clauses. Growth of Old Roman Creed into present form. Meaning of added clauses. Spread of this form. English translation. Summary.

II. Early creeds in the East. Difference between them and the Apostles' Creed. The original Nicene Creed. Its relation to the creed now called Nicene. *Filioque* clause. English translation. Summary.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The following chapter aims to be a brief presentation of what specialists in creedal history are generally agreed upon. Where equally eminent authorities differ, both sides of the question are indicated, but much in the way of discussion of disputed points has necessarily been omitted in the interest of clarity.

I

THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTLES' AND NICENE CREEDS

I. The Apostles' Creed[1]

The earliest record of the creed commonly called the Apostles' Creed in the exact form in which it is used to-day appears in the writings of a Frankish abbot and missionary named Pirminius who died in 753 A.D. This does not mean that the creed was newly composed at that date, but only that the last of several additions to an older form was made at or shortly before that time.

The older creed from which the Apostles' Creed, as given by Pirminius and as known to-day, was derived is designated by scholars "the Old Roman Creed." We know the exact wording of this Old Roman Creed in about the year 400 A.D., for at that time Rufinus, a presbyter of Aquileia (near Trieste), wrote a commentary on the creed as it was used in his own church and compared it with the creed used at Rome. The text of the Roman creed is given on the following page.

[1] The text of the Apostles' Creed as given in the Book of Common Prayer is as follows:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins: The Resurrection of the body: And the Life everlasting. Amen.

> "I believe in God the Father almighty; and in Christ Jesus, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried, the third day rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead; And in the Holy Ghost, the holy Church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh."

Rufinus believed this to have been composed by the apostles, yet, curiously enough, he did not think it strange or unfitting that the creed of his own church, which was derived from it, should differ from it in some particulars. In his creed the first clause ran: "I believe in God the Father almighty, invisible and incapable of suffering," the last: "the resurrection of *this* flesh." The words "He descended into hell" were inserted after "buried." Rufinus also tells us that there were other variations in other localities, and although he praises the church at Rome for preserving the creed in the exact form delivered by the apostles, he naïvely observes that there had been no need for variations at Rome, since no heresy had arisen there. If variations were needed elsewhere to combat heresy, Rufinus thought they were justified. He is thus a witness to the flexibility of the creed at the end of the fourth century as well as to the wording of the Roman text of it.

Sixty years before Rufinus wrote, Marcellus, the exiled bishop of Ancyra, who had been received at Rome, recorded his agreement with the faith of the Roman church in the words of its creed. From him we learn that the Old Roman Creed had precisely the same form in 340 A.D. as in 400 A.D. This date, 340, is the earliest to which we can trace with absolute certainty the text of the Old Roman Creed. This does not mean, however, that it was not in existence before that time.

That there is no earlier record of its exact text is

attributed to the secrecy in which it was kept during the period from about 150 to 325 A.D.,—the period in which the chief persecutions occurred. The creed was then imparted by word of mouth only; it served as a password by which a Christian established his right to fellowship in a community to which he came as a stranger. Christian writers, therefore, who refer to it during this period do so not in direct quotation but in paraphrase. From such paraphrases it is reasonably clear that the creed in about the form given by Rufinus and Marcellus was known to writers in the latter part of the second century. Thus, for example, writes Tertullian in about the year 200:

> "The rule of faith is altogether one, sole, immovable and irreformable—namely, of believing in one God almighty, maker of the world, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate; the third day raised from the dead, received in the heavens, sitting now at the right hand of the Father, about to come to judge quick and dead also through the resurrection of the flesh." (*De Virginibus Velandis,* I.)

In about 180 A.D. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, speaks of Christian nations who guard

> "the ancient tradition, believing in one God, Maker of heaven and earth, and all that is in them; through Jesus Christ the Son of God; who, because of His astounding love toward His creatures, sustained the birth of the Virgin, Himself uniting man to God, and suffered under Pontius Pilate, and rising again was received in brightness, and shall come again in glory as the Saviour of those who are saved and the judge of those who are judged." (*Adv. Haer.,* III, 4.)

From this and other less definite allusions it would seem that Irenaeus, as well as Tertullian, was acquainted with the Old Roman Creed, though perhaps in a simpler form

than that known to Marcellus and Rufinus. When, however, we examine the writings of Christians who lived earlier in the second century it is by no means clear that they knew of its existence.

The most noted American student of creedal history, Professor McGiffert, is convinced that there is no evidence for a knowledge of the Old Roman Creed on the part of any writer earlier than Irenaeus and Tertullian. He therefore places the date of its composition between 150 and 175 A.D., and, from a comparison of all the passages referring to it in Irenaeus and Tertullian, reconstructs the creed known to them as follows:

> "I believe in God the Father almighty and in Christ Jesus His Son, who was born of Mary the Virgin, was crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried, on the third day rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, from whence he cometh to judge quick and dead; and in Holy Spirit, resurrection of flesh."

If this be correct it follows that the words "our Lord," "of the Holy Ghost" after "born," "the holy Church," "the remission of sins," all of which appear in the creed by 340, must have been added sometime between 175 and that date.

There are, on the other hand, eminent German and English scholars who believe that there are sufficient traces of creedal language in earlier Christian writers to warrant the inference that the Old Roman Creed was in existence in the first half of the second century. Some put its origin as early as 100 A.D.

However this may be, all are agreed that it was not written by the apostles, nor known to the writers of the New Testament, and that either in the form given by Rufinus or in a somewhat briefer form, such as that last quoted, it was in use at or soon after 150 A.D. in Rome.

It was taught to new converts and recited by them at their baptism.

It is also generally agreed that it was an expansion of an earlier, simpler baptismal confession such as "I believe in the Father and in the Son and in the Holy Ghost" (see Matt. 28:19), or "I believe in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Holy Ghost" (see 2 Cor. 13:14). Preceding these threefold confessions and in some places remaining in use after their introduction, there seems to have been the form "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God" (see 1 John 4:15 and 5:5, and the interpolated verse, Acts 8:37), which may have been preceded by the simple statement "I believe that Jesus is Lord" (see 1 Cor. 12:3; compare Rom. 10:9). This was perhaps the first Christian creed.

To sum up the early history of the creed, which we have so far traced backwards:

(1) In New Testament times, the baptismal creed seems to have consisted of a profession of belief in Jesus as Lord or as Son of God.

(2) Probably before the end of the first century there was used in some parts of the Church a baptismal profession of belief in God, Jesus and the Spirit, or in Father, Son and Spirit. This gradually replaced the earlier form.

(3) This threefold formula was expanded sometime in the second century into the Old Roman Creed, either in the form known to Marcellus and Rufinus (see page 4); or in a shorter version such as that reconstructed from the writings of Tertullian and Irenaeus (see page 6).

Why the expansion of the threefold formula into the Old Roman Creed took just the form it did is a question to which students of the creed have given much attention. It is readily seen that in the Old Roman Creed the statements concerning the Father and the Spirit received little or no elaboration, while that concerning the Son was expanded at some length. Some scholars hold

that this expansion represents an endeavor to give instruction in the essentials of belief concerning our Lord to new converts to Christianity. Others feel that if this be so it is more difficult to explain what is omitted than what is given, for no mention is made of our Lord's baptism, his teaching, his revelation of God's will, his mighty works, or the purpose of his life and death. Those who point out these omissions believe that the creed was expanded not so much to instruct converts as to combat heresies, especially a second century heresy which so emphasized the heavenly, spiritual nature of Christ that it denied that he had ever really become man; he had merely assumed the appearance of a man; his body was a phantom; his birth, death and resurrection were apparent, not real. Over against this the creed, it is said, was made to stress his genuine humanity. It not only affirmed his birth but identified his mother by name; it not only spoke of his death but dated it "under Pontius Pilate." It taught that it was he who had been truly born and actually crucified and not a mere spirit, who rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. So also it is thought that the phrase "shall come to judge the quick and the dead," was meant to deny the heretical doctrine that a merciful God would judge no one, while "the resurrection of the flesh" offset the teaching, then held as heresy, that man's spirit only, not his flesh, was immortal.

Whether exposition or defense of the faith or something of both account for the origin of the Old Roman Creed, it should be noted that the explanation of the purpose with which a clause was introduced, even if adequate, does not necessarily exhaust the original meaning of the clause. Thus, while "Born of the Virgin Mary" may have been introduced to affirm our Lord's true humanity by emphasizing his birth from a human mother, it is practically certain that, to the author or authors of the Old Roman Creed, it also meant that this mother was a

virgin and the birth miraculous. Belief in the Virgin Birth was widely and commonly held in the second century.

On the other hand, there are clauses which, from the time of their first use in the creed, were open to varying interpretations. To many, perhaps most, second century Christians "he ascended into heaven" meant a bodily going up into a heaven spatially conceived, yet there must have been others in the second century who, like Origen in the third, interpreted heaven spiritually. The "resurrection of the flesh" was taken literally by the Christian writers of the second century, especially Tertullian, yet here also Origen urged a spiritual interpretation. Tertullian's ideas, however, prevailed, and, with few exceptions, the chief teachers of the Church from the fourth century until comparatively recent times have insisted that at the resurrection every man shall, in the words of the English reformers of the sixteenth century, "take again the very selfsame body and flesh which he had while he lived here on earth."

It is perhaps needless to point out that the Old Roman Creed made no attempt to define the relations of Father, Son and Spirit, beyond calling Jesus the Son of God. There is no mention of his preexistence or anything to indicate whether he is to be regarded as subordinate to or equal with the Father. No relationship whatever between the Spirit and either Father or Son is defined, nor is it clear whether the Spirit is meant to be thought of as a person or an influence. This lack of a formulated doctrine of the Trinity reflects the theological thought of the second century. In the works of Justin Martyr, who wrote in about 150 A.D., the preexistence of the Son is stressed, yet in relation to the Father He is spoken of as "in the second place, and the prophetic spirit in the third rank" (Apol. I, 13; see also I, 60). Justin conceives of the Holy Ghost chiefly as the spirit of Old Testament prophecy and at times identifies—or confuses—him with the preexistent Word of God (Apol. I, 33).

Something of the same uncertainty concerning the Holy Ghost is found in Irenaeus.

Whatever the meaning of the clauses of the Old Roman Creed, it is reasonably certain that the creed itself, in use in the second century in Rome, spread thence throughout western Christendom and perhaps also throughout the East; but if it did spread in the East it was so entirely transformed there or replaced by other creeds that its very existence was forgotten.

We have seen that in 400 Rufinus ascribed apostolic authorship to it. He was citing a tradition which is thought to have then been in existence for at least a century,—a tradition which undoubtedly did much to insure the spread of the Old Roman Creed in the West. Yet, as Rufinus also tells us, this creed was by no means regarded as a fixed and unalterable formula. His observations as to variant forms are amply borne out by the records we have of creeds in Italy, North Africa, Spain and Gaul from the fourth century on. In one or another of these creeds appear all the phrases which were ultimately added to the Old Roman Creed as well as some which were not,—such, for instance, as that in the North African creed, "I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of the universe, king of the ages, immortal and invisible." It is impossible to say why some of these variations found their way into the final form of the creed while others did not. There appears to have been no law of selection.

The additions which secured a permanent place and which can readily be noted by comparing the creed to-day with the Old Roman Creed, are as follows: "Maker of Heaven and Earth," "conceived," "suffered," "dead," "He descended into hell," "God [the Father] almighty," "Catholic," "Communion of Saints," and "the life everlasting."

Of these, "life everlasting" was probably the first accepted, having been used in the creed of North Africa as

early as 250 A.D. The last, "Maker of heaven and earth," came into use in Gaul between 700 and 750. The other additions, some perhaps of ultimate Eastern origin, appeared in different Western creeds in the fourth century, and all found their way into the creeds of Gaul by the sixth.

"The life everlasting" was a natural if not inevitable expansion of the clause on the resurrection. "Conceived," "suffered," "dead," "God . . . Almighty," appear to have been added for the sake of verbal completeness and were without doctrinal significance. "Catholic," as originally used in Eastern creeds, seems to have meant primarily "orthodox," and served to distinguish the true Church from heretical bodies calling themselves churches, but when it entered the Western creed it was probably looked on merely as a part of the usual name of the Church. Some scholars hold that the name "holy Catholic Church" referred, already at that time in the West, to the organization of churches grouped round the see of Rome. "Maker of heaven and earth," as a phrase descriptive of God, was used by theological writers of the second century to counteract the heresy that there were two Gods, a superior, spiritual God revealed by Christ and an inferior deity who created the physical universe; but when it came into the creed of Gaul this heresy was long dead. The phrase was probably taken over from the Nicene Creed for completeness of statement.

While the words "He descended into hell" do not appear in any creed before the second half of the fourth century, the idea occurs in earlier writers, notably in Irenaeus (180 A.D.). It was believed that our Lord, between death and resurrection, went to the under-world, the abode of the dead (not the place of torment for the damned), to bring salvation to the prophets and patriarchs of the Old Testament. In the fourth century the belief gained currency that Christ's descent into Hades not only effected the deliverance of the Old Testament saints, but also the

overthrow of Satan. Whether this or the earlier concept was in the mind of those who first used the clause in the creed it is impossible to say. Nor can we tell why the clause was deemed of sufficient importance to be put into the creed. Practically every writer on the subject has a different explanation. In the case of the article, "the Communion of Saints," there is equal divergence of opinion not only as to the purpose of its introduction, but also as to its original meaning. Neither this nor the article on the descent into hell has ever been generally accepted in the East.

Although the creed assumed the form in which we now know it between 700 and 750 in Gaul (France), it took two centuries more for this form to attain general acceptance in western Europe. That it was accepted even then was doubtless due to the rising power of the Franks and the influence of their greatest sovereign, Charlemagne. They became the dominant race in western Europe and the protectors of the bishops of Rome; it would seem that under their influence the church at Rome accepted the Gallic (French) revision of the Old Roman Creed. The Old Roman Creed had, in the sixth century, dropped out of use at Rome, being replaced by the Nicene Creed. In its Gallic form it was now reintroduced and the legend of apostolic origin reapplied to it. Its acceptance at Rome meant its further spread into the Germanic north by Roman missionaries. In England, however, the use of slightly variant forms of the creed continued until the Norman Conquest (1066).

While there is some doubt as to whether the Old Roman Creed was ever used in the East in the early centuries, it is certain that the enlarged form of that creed which became current in the West in the ninth century was never used in the East. When negotiations looking to reunion of the Eastern and Western Churches were held at Ferrara in 1438, the Archbishop of Ephesus, spokesman of the East, said, in reply to a remark of Cardinal Cesarini

about the Apostles' Creed, "We have no Apostles' Creed, and have never seen one."

The English translation of the creed in "The King's Book," of 1543, replaced "resurrection of the flesh" (*carnis resurrectionem*) by "resurrection of the body." Although no difference in meaning was intended at the time, room has been made by the new word for what has become a widespread interpretation of the clause in accord with St. Paul's doctrine of the spiritual body, rather than the literal adherence to the idea conveyed by the word "flesh." The translation "body" has been followed throughout English-speaking Christendom (except in the service of Baptism in the English Prayer Book and that for Visitation of the Sick in both the English and American Prayer Books).

The first American Prayer Book (1789) gave permission either to omit "He descended into hell," or to substitute for it "He went into the place of departed spirits." The revision of 1892 withdrew the permission to omit the clause but continued the alternative.

The Swedish National (Episcopal) Church uses the creed in the plural form, "We believe," and with the following variations from the received text: "only begotten son," "begotten of the Holy Ghost," "descended into the kingdom of death," "one holy universal Church," "the resurrection of the dead."

As has already been pointed out, this creed is unknown in the Eastern Church.

SUMMARY

The creed called the Apostles' Creed was not written by the apostles nor known to the writers of the New Testament. It was, in its original form, an expansion of the early baptismal confession of belief in the Father, Son and Spirit. This expansion is thought by most scholars to have taken place in Rome at about 150 A.D., either to explain the faith to converts or defend it against heresies.

Further additions, of which the most important were "Maker of heaven and earth," "He descended into hell," "Catholic," "Communion of Saints," and "life everlasting," were subsequently made in different parts of the West, the creed assuming its present shape in Gaul (France) soon after 700 A.D. By about 900 this form was widely accepted in the West. It is not used in the East.

II. The Nicene Creed[2]

The uncertainty as to whether or not the Old Roman Creed spread through the East has already been noted. Some scholars think that it did and that Eastern creeds developed from it, others suppose that the creeds of the East developed independently from the early threefold baptismal confession. Whichever theory be correct, it is certain that there existed in the third and fourth centuries variant creeds in different parts of the East. Not regarded

[2] The text of the Nicene Creed as given in the Book of Common Prayer is as follows:

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God; Begotten, not made; Being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man: And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried: And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures: And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father: And he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Proprets: And I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins: And I look for the Resurrection of the dead: And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

as unalterable, they were modified freely to meet the needs of each locality and each generation.

The creeds of Jerusalem and Caesarea may be cited as illustrations of such Eastern creeds. They are also significant as sources contributing to the present form of the creed called the Nicene. We know their texts as they existed in the first half of the fourth century. That of Jerusalem was as follows:

> "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
>
> "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten, begotten of the Father, true God, before all worlds, through whom all things were made; incarnate and made man; crucified and buried; and rose again the third day; and ascended into heaven; and sat on the right hand of the Father; and shall come again in glory to judge the quick and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
>
> "And in one Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, who spake in the prophets; and in one baptism of repentance for remission of sins; and in one holy Catholic Church; and in the resurrection of the flesh; and in the life eternal."

The creed of Caesarea ran thus:

> "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible.
>
> "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the only begotten Son, the first born of all creation, before all worlds begotten of the Father, by whom also all things were made; who for our salvation was made flesh, and lived among men, and suffered, and rose again the third day, and ascended to the Father, and will come again in glory to judge the quick and the dead.
>
> "And we believe also in one Holy Ghost."

It is possible that this also contained clauses at the end on the remission of sins, the Church, the resurrection and eternal life. The text as here given is found in a speech of Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, at the Council of Nicaea, and it may be that he quoted only that part of the creed which he thought applicable to the question under discussion.

It will be noted that in contrast to the Old Roman Creed these Eastern creeds on the one hand stress the preexistent divinity of our Lord and his place in creation by such phrases as "God of God," "true God," "before all worlds," "by whom all things were made," while on the other hand they do not mention Pontius Pilate or the Virgin Mary. There is no reason to suppose that their authors did not believe that our Lord was crucified under Pontius Pilate or born of the Virgin Mary, but they evidently thought these were matters of secondary importance in comparison with the great central truth of His divinity and His oneness with the Father.

The creed of Caesarea was, as we have said, quoted at the Council of Nicaea. This was a council summoned in 325 A.D. by Constantine, the first Christian emperor, to consider the views of Arius, a prominent presbyter of Alexandria, who, while regarding Christ as a supernatural being worthy of worship, taught that he was subordinate to the Father, was created by the Father, and was not co-eternal with him. Earlier orthodox Christian writers, such as Justin Martyr, in the second century, had held very loosely defined views of the relation of Christ to God, and had in some instances spoken of him as subordinate to the Father, but to the developed Christian thought of the fourth century the teachings of Arius appeared destructive of the very essence of Christianity. They seemed to lead to the conception of a duality of Gods, one created by the other, and hence to the worship of a creature, which was essentially pagan.

About 250 bishops, representing the whole Christian

world, although most of them were from the East, assembled at Nicaea. To them Eusebius of Caesarea presented the baptismal creed of his own church for adoption as the standard of orthodoxy. This was felt to be insufficient to guard against Arian views, and was amended by the insertion of such phrases as "of the substance of the Father," and "of one substance with the Father." To it was added an anathema or condemnation of all who held Arian opinions. It should be noted that the Greek word "ousia" which was translated into Latin as "substantia" and hence has come into English as "substance," might better be translated into the speech of to-day as "essence." The Arians did not believe that Christ was of the essence of the Father.

The creed of Caesarea, as amended and adopted by the Council of Nicaea, is as follows:

> "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible.
>
> "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made, both those in heaven and those on earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate and was made man; suffered, and rose again the third day; ascended into heaven; is coming to judge the quick and the dead.
>
> "And in the Holy Ghost.
>
> "But those who say 'Once He was not,' and 'Before He was begotten He was not,' and 'He came into existence out of what was not,' or 'That the Son of God was of a different substance or essence,' or 'That He was made,' or 'is changeable or mutable,' these the Catholic Church anathematises."

This is the original Nicene Creed, and the only one to which in strictness the name should be applied.

The fathers of Nicaea followed the creed of Caesarea in making no reference to the Virgin Mary. True, they believed in the Virgin Birth; but so did Arius. Belief in the Virgin Birth was therefore clearly no test of orthodoxy. It is, indeed, noteworthy that when the possibilities of language were exhausted to express the supreme divinity of Christ and His essential oneness with the Father it was not thought necessary even to mention the Virgin Birth.

Despite official adoption by the Council, this creed did not win general acceptance. Those who inclined to the views of Arius would not use it; and it was found by the orthodox insufficient to meet new heresies which soon arose, namely, (1) that the Holy Spirit was not truly God, and (2) that Christ's humanity was not perfect, his body and natural impulses only being human, while the preexistent Word of God, or Logos, took the place of his mind or spirit.

Hence in different parts of the East local creeds were expanded or composed to meet these false teachings. Two specimens of such enlargements appear in a work by Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, in 374. A paragraph from one of these illustrates how the article on the Virgin Birth was introduced to emphasize the perfect humanity of our Lord:

> "Who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate, that is, was born perfectly of the holy Mary the ever-virgin, through the Holy Ghost, was made man, that is, took perfect manhood, soul and body and mind and all things, whatever belongs to manhood, without sin . . . and was perfectly made man."

The other creed cited by Epiphanius is almost identical with the creed we now call the Nicene, and which all

scholars are agreed is an expansion of the creed of Jerusalem quoted above (p. 15). It is believed that this expansion took place at about 360 or a year or two later, under Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem. To the creed of Jerusalem there were added (1) the significant portions of the creed of the Council of Nicaea, to refute Arianism; (2) certain phrases concerning the Holy Ghost, to refute the heresy that He was not truly God; (3) the words affirming that our Lord was incarnate "of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary." It is sometimes said that these words were introduced, like the paragraph of the larger creed just quoted, to refute the heresy that His humanity was not perfect. The difficulty with this explanation is that the chief proponent of this heresy, namely, Apollinaris, appears to have accepted the Virgin Birth. It may be, as Mr. A. E. Burn, in *An Introduction to the Creeds,* page 106, has suggested, that the heresy aimed at was either a revival of that earlier heresy that Christ merely appeared as a man and had not really been born at all, or the heresy, put forward at this time in the name of Apollinaris, that our Lord's body had a heavenly origin. However this may be, the enlarged creed of Jerusalem as given by Epiphanius is as follows:

> "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
>
> "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, that is of the substance of the Father, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made, both those in heaven and those on earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and

suffered, and was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and is coming again with glory to judge the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

"And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Life Giver, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets; In one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come."

Here we recognize almost the exact form of the creed we call Nicene. With a few slight changes, bringing it still more nearly into the form in which we now know it, it was accepted by the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D. The members of this council supposed it to have been a creed set forth by the Council of Constantinople of 381, on Nicene lines. Hence it is often called the Constantinopolitan Creed or the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed, but both these titles are misnomers, since it is now clear that the Council of Constantinople neither composed nor adopted it. It has been suggested that the Council of Constantinople may have recorded it, in minutes now lost, as the expression of faith presented by Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, to vindicate his orthodoxy, which had been questioned; but of this we are not sure. The first official adoption of it was at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D. At the same time this Council reaffirmed the original Nicene Creed as of superior importance to this enlarged creed, and certainly never intended the enlarged creed to be substituted for the Nicene.

For almost a century after 451 the two creeds were kept distinct, but gradually, because of the similarity of certain parts of both, they were confused, and, after 566, when the Emperor Justin II ordered the use of the en-

larged form, the name Nicene was transferred to it. It has since been known by that name and is now the sole creed of the Eastern Church.

For many years the Western Church took no notice of either the original Nicene or the enlarged creed, but in 589 a council at Toledo adopted the enlarged creed for use in the Spanish Church. The form which became current in Spain contained the phrase, not found in the East, "and the Son" (*filioque*), in the clause "the Holy Ghost . . . who proceedeth from the Father and the Son." This represented the Western view, current since the time of St. Augustine, of the obscure question of the relation of Spirit to Father and Son. In this form the creed found its way into the kingdom of the Franks and was spread throughout the West under the patronage of Charlemagne.

The Eastern Church looked upon the use of this additional clause as not only unauthorized but also heretical, and in 867 Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople, gave it as one of the reasons for his excommunication of Pope Nicholas I. Thus a phrase, representing what Pope Leo III aptly characterized as "one of the more abstruse mysteries of the faith," has become a cause of separation between the Eastern and Western Churches.

The first English translation of this creed appeared in the Prayer Book of 1549. Here the word "holy" was omitted from the clause "one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." This omission appears to have been due to the opinion of the historians of the day that the word had not been in the original version of the clause. Although this opinion has since been shown to have been mistaken, "holy" has not been replaced in either the English or the American Prayer Book. The Chinese Episcopal Church has, however, recently restored it in the Chinese version of the creed. The Swedish Church says, "one holy Universal and Apostolic Church," and follows

the Eastern Church in using the creed in the plural form, "*We* believe."

SUMMARY

In 325 the Council of Nicaea issued a revision of the creed of Caesarea, in opposition to Arianism. In about 360 the chief parts of this Nicene Creed were combined by the Church at Jerusalem with an older baptismal creed, plus certain phrases on the Holy Ghost, and the clause on the Virgin Birth. This creed of Jerusalem was accepted by the Council of Chalcedon 451, under the erroneous belief that it had previously been issued by the Council of Constantinople of 381. The Council of Chalcedon looked upon it as second in importance to the creed of Nicaea and did not intend it to be used as a substitute for the creed of Nicaea. About a century later it was confused with the creed of Nicaea and called Nicene. It became and is today the sole creed of the East. It came into use in Spain with the addition of the *filioque* clause ("and the son") in 589 A.D., and spread thence through the West. It was widely adopted in this form in the West by the ninth century. It is the one creed now common to Eastern and Western Christendom, but the insertion of the *filioque* clause in the West has been a cause for the separation of the Eastern from the Western Church.

Those who desire to pursue the subject further may find simple treatments in English in A. E. Burn, *The Apostles' Creed;* A. C. McGiffert, *The Apostles' Creed;* E. C. S. Gibson, *The Three Creeds;* and the articles on the creeds in the Encyclopedia Britannica, Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, and The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. Extended bibliographies are given in these encyclopedia articles.

II

LITURGIES AND CREEDS

By

Henry Bradford Washburn

SYNOPSIS

The custom of reciting a creed is one of long standing. Modification of the custom, therefore, seems to many out of the question. History, however, shows that the Church has borne witness to freedom in the use of liturgies and that the creeds have not always occupied the same prominence in the liturgies which they hold at present. Does not the knowledge of such flexibility in liturgical and creedal use prepare one to discuss the possibility of the alternative and permissive uses of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds?

II

LITURGIES AND CREEDS

THERE are two creeds in the Prayer Book of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Apostles' and the Nicene. One of these creeds is said on practically every occasion of public worship. According to the rubrics of the Prayer Book, either the Apostles' or the Nicene Creed is obligatory at Morning and Evening Prayer and at services of which the Holy Communion is a part.

The custom of reciting a creed during the service is one of long standing. Therefore the creeds have naturally taken the strong hold on the minds and affections of worshippers that centuries of use and gathering religious experience create. In fact, the average worshipper can hardly conceive of a service without a creed; nor can he imagine a Church holding together, maintaining its contact with the Catholic Church or preserving its continuity with the Church of earlier centuries unless the services be built up around a creed.

Such an attitude toward the Creeds has naturally made any suggestion of change in their use seem not only impracticable but almost absurd. Any modification, or any alteration, and certainly any intention even occasionally not to use a creed, would seem to be among the liturgical impossibilities.

This feeling is easily understood. It is due to our reverence for a book that expresses, and that for nearly four centuries has expressed, our spiritual life. Not only that. Nearly all of it has become, in some way, intimately associated with our own religious experience. To many of us the creeds themselves are formularies, every clause

of which suggests a very precious meaning. As we repeat them our hearts and minds range out not only over certain truths we have learned from the Church, but also over the meaning of those truths as we have learned them in our daily life. But our extreme reverence is due also to habit. Since the days of Elizabeth the Anglican Communion has been a Church of virtually one book. Uniformity in use has created a feeling that any tendency toward diversity would endanger the integrity of the Church.

To test the character of such a point of view, it may be helpful to do two things: To see whether the Church has not borne witness to a certain amount of freedom in the use of formularies, and to ascertain the exact position in the formularies which the creeds have taken. Such a review may make it seem at least permissible to discuss changes in creedal use, and possibly also reasonable to suggest alternative forms of creeds and even the permissive use of those we have.

I

Shortly after St. Augustine came to England he wrote to Pope Gregory I the following question: Whereas the faith is one and the same, are there different customs in different churches? and is one custom of masses observed in the Holy Roman Church, and another in that of the Gauls? Gregory answered: "You know, my brother, the custom of the Roman Church, in which, you remember, you were bred up. But it pleases me that if you have found anything either in the Roman [Church] or [that] of the Gauls, or any other Church, which may be more acceptable to Almighty God, you carefully make choice of the same, and sedulously teach the Church of the English, which as yet is new in the Faith, whatsoever you can gather from the several Churches. For things ought not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Choose, therefore, from each

Church those things that are pious, religious and correct, and when you have, as it were, made them up into one body, let the minds of the English be accustomed thereto."[1]

Gregory the Great gave this advice about the year 600. He was not only appealing to Augustine's common sense; he was also declaring a principle upon which the Church was acting almost universally and upon which it had acted from the beginning: that liturgies, while expressing the faith common to the whole Church, should meet the needs of the local congregation. Gregory might have gone further, and have said that the unity and the catholicity of the Church not only do not depend upon liturgical uniformity, but may be found among churches with practically no liturgical forms and among those of peculiar local customs.

Speaking strictly, the first traces of a Christian liturgy are not found until early in the second century. In the first century there may have been slight adaptations of the Jewish ritual;[2] there may have been the initial use of expressions which later appeared in the liturgy; but there was no Christian liturgy as such. During these early years the faith and the faith only, under Apostolic direction, bound the many congregations together. Each community expressed this faith as it would.

On the eve of the second century a change began to take place. It has been thought that Clement of Rome (c. 90 A.D.) used forms of prayer, but such a conclusion is doubtful.[3] The little volume called "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" (c. 110–135), while not giving final evidence of forms of service, at least directs how the Holy Communion and Baptism should be conducted. Justin Martyr (c. 150) offers the most complete account of Sunday worship in the second century. He speaks of

[1] Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, p. 4.
[2] R. M. Woolley, *The Liturgy of the Primitive Church*, Chap. II, *passim*.
[3] R. M. Woolley, *ibid.*

reading the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets, the president's admonition and exhortation, the making of common prayers for ourselves and for others, the brotherly kiss, the preparation of bread, wine and water, the prayers and praises which the president sends up "as best he can."[4] But the description would hardly warrant us to conclude that more than a certain course of worship was pursued. Nevertheless, the gradual tendency toward a definite sequence would sooner or later lead to definite forms of service. Granting, however, that the germs of liturgies were apparent at this early date, there is no evidence that even the order as found in Justin was, in detail, peculiar to all sections of the Church.

The same conclusion may be drawn from the evidence of the third century. Even though the Church at large was becoming highly organized, and even though the days were coming when the authority of bishops was to be universally recognized, there is no attempt made or dreamed of to encourage any common liturgical use. In fact it is well on in the fourth century before we find the first Service-book, properly so-called, containing the prayers of Sarapion, Bishop of Thmuis.[5]

From the fourth century until the eve of the Reformation, Orders of Service and Liturgies are produced in large numbers. During the early centuries of this period those liturgies come into use which are to be the basis of the mediæval liturgies in both the Eastern and Western Churches. Of Eastern liturgies the better known are the Jerusalem Liturgy, named St. James; the Alexandrian, St. Mark; the Byzantine, associated first with St. Basil and afterward with St. Chrysostom—this last being the "normal liturgy of the Eastern Church"[6] at the present day. In the West there are the various sacramentaries

[4] Justin, *Apol.* i, 67.

[5] Proctor and Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 5.

[6] Neale and Littledale, *Primitive Liturgies*, p. xx.

bearing the names of the Popes Leo, Gelasius, and Gregory, but undoubtedly of somewhat later date, and, among others, liturgies of Gaul, Rome, Spain, and the city of Milan.

The point to remember is, however, that Service-books are peculiar to certain localities or regions and that they co-exist without any suspicion that diversity of use might threaten the Faith or the unity of the Church. One section of the East differs in detail from another section of the East. One section of the West varies from another. And Eastern and Western orders are widely apart in their length, their phraseology, and in their religious emphasis. But yet all sections are part of the same Church; all are united in their general loyalty to the Faith.

It is even more to the purpose to notice the liturgical customs in England during the mediæval period. Here again the unity of the Church does not appear either in the close resemblance of the English "Uses" to that of the Church in Rome or to one another. Although our own Prayer Book is more deeply indebted to the Sarum (Salisbury) Use than to any other, it is simply because this Use seemed the better adapted to the purpose, because it was the dominant English Use, and not because it was required either by custom or by canon law. "While the framework of the services was constant and the materials of the services drawn from a common source, there still remained room for considerable variety. It is very rare to find any two early MS Service-books quite alike. No doubt this fact is to be discounted, because so small a number of early Service-books at all is extant, but after making all due allowances it is more right to regard each MS as a book standing by itself than to expect to find a number of books exactly alike. In England in early days it seems clear that books differing considerably from one another were not only used but deliberately provided for use side by side in the same church. The inconvenience of this is obvious, but it was not apparently till the twelfth or

thirteenth century that any serious attempt was made to remedy it. When the influential churches had reduced their own services to order, it was natural for others in the neighborhood to follow them, and thus there grew up in the thirteenth century, under the guidance, or with the sanction of, the Bishop, the Diocesan Use, i.e., a species of service emanating from a cathedral, radiating widely throughout the diocese and even spreading to other dioceses."[7] The authors of this quotation call attention to the further fact that certain of the cathedrals were served by monks and others by secular clergy, thereby, in the nature of the case, differing widely from one another and making it impossible for the former to be the norm for use in parish churches.

It must be remembered that throughout this period the Western Church had a strong consciousness of unity. It began as a kind of advisory unity under the acute statesmanship of Gregory the Great; it increased under the feudal claim of Gregory VII and Innocent III; it found its spiritual realization in the internationalism of pilgrims, monks and scholars. And although the East separated from the West finally in the eleventh century, the cause was temperamental rather than doctrinal or liturgical. It may be summed up in the East's refusal to be subject to the Papacy. The East through Constantinople preserved a unity of its own. In each case, however, whatever the tendencies toward closer or looser union, the liturgy best liked by the region was looked upon as a perfectly permissible possession. Provided the Faith were protected by its formularies, a church might worship God as it pleased.

A counter movement becomes apparent when periods of political or ecclesiastical centralization appear. Undoubtedly Charlemagne thought that uniformity of services would make for unity of Empire and ecclesiastical order. He brought great pressure to bear on the churches of

[7] Proctor and Frere, pp. 13–14.

outlying districts to conform to imperial custom. In this he was more insistent than the early mediæval papacy itself; in fact he tried to force upon Rome the doctrine of uniformity. Beginning with the development of an absolute Papacy in the fifteenth century, the drive toward a uniform liturgy gains in strength until the reforms set in motion at the Council of Trent set the seal of uniformity on the Service-books of the Latin Rite.

It is but one step from the imperial policy of Charlemagne and the ecclesiastical policy of later mediæval and early modern Rome to the attempts toward uniformity in England under Edward VI and Elizabeth. The monarchs and their advisers felt the need not only of a reformed liturgy, but of one that would be uniform throughout the realm. The exigencies of reformation demanded it; national religious homogeneity suggested it. Loyalty to the realm was discovered in the acceptance of a national Service-book.

Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the historical and religious value of such liturgical uniformity. Although the transition from many forms to one was accompanied by friction and waste, England succeeded in forming a liturgy that has met the spiritual needs of nearly four centuries of English-speaking Christians. However, the foregoing sketch will show that the respect and affection we have for our Prayer Book, and our extreme hesitation in subjecting it to revision, must not lead us to suppose that the Church cannot benefit by greater elasticity of liturgical usage.

II

The creeds first appeared in days when there were no liturgies in our sense of the word; they shared in the general informality of the services themselves.

Mr. C. H. Turner thinks that possibly the earliest form of creed was that of question and answer. He refers to the Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril of Jerusalem

(c. 350) in which it reads: "Ye were led by the hand to the holy font [or pool] of baptism and each one was asked whether he believed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."[8] A similar custom prevailed in the West also, for "the Gelasian Sacramentary gives us the Roman Interrogations in their earliest known form (c. 500): 'Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty?' 'I do believe.' 'Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was born and suffered?' 'I do believe.' 'Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh?' 'I do believe.'"[9] The dates of these instructions would allow of the existence of a fairly well defined creed; they would make it quite probable that those of whom these questions were asked had been instructed in the details of the creed; but as a summary of the faith they are simple and inclusive and, possibly, all that was required.

Forms similar to these very ancient examples have survived in the Church down to the present day. The modern Roman Rite of Baptism includes them. The answer in the Catechism to the question, "What dost thou chiefly learn in these articles of thy belief?" suggests them. The question "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty. . . . Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, etc.?" in the Visitation of the Sick, reminds one of them.

The creeds were in these early days confined to the ceremonies of initiation or Baptism. They did not appear in those services which would correspond to the Mass or the Holy Communion of the present day, i.e., the principal service for all who had been admitted to full membership. And just as the Interrogations in one district vary greatly from those in another, so did the forms of the creed. August Hahn has done a great service in collecting these Rules of Faith, Baptismal Symbols, Creeds and Confes-

[8] Turner, *Use of Creeds*, p. 13.
[9] Turner, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

sions in one volume,[10] and in allowing one to see what freedom there seemed to be in stating belief. The core of the creeds was practically the same, but the method of statement may have varied according to the temperament and purpose of the locality. If we may assume that Irenaeus represented Northern Italy and Southern Gaul about the year 175, we may imagine those who were baptized receiving and repeating a creed which confessed faith in God the Father Almighty, Maker of the heavens, the earth and the seas and everything in them, and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was made flesh for our salvation . . . and in the birth from the Virgin, and the suffering and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, etc. And if we may take his contemporary Tertullian of Carthage (c. 200) as a faithful representative of the North African Church, we may hear the same faith confessed in the following terms: "There is one only God and that He is none other than the Creator of the world, who produced all things out of nothing through His own word, first of all sent forth; that this Word is called His Son, and, under the name of God was seen in 'diverse manners' by the patriarchs . . . at last brought down by the Spirit and Power of the Father into the Virgin Mary . . . and being born of her, went forth as Jesus Christ; thenceforth He preached the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven, worked miracles . . . will come with glory to take the saints to the enjoyment of everlasting life and of the heavenly promises, and to condemn the wicked to everlasting fire, after the resurrection of both these classes shall have happened, together with the restoration of their flesh."[11] Such were the variations of the West.

In the East there was a similar latitude resulting from the normal development of the Church in different com-

[10] Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole.*

[11] *Praescription of Heretics,* C. XIII, Ante-Nicene Library.

munities. There were, among others, the creeds of Cæsarea, Jerusalem, and Salamis. If we may reason from the practice of the West, each of these creeds represents the form used in Baptism in various localities, and each was a summary of the subjects taught to those to be baptized. We can almost discover the religious mood of the people of the region by reading their creed. One of the oldest is that of Gregory Thaumaturgus (c. 233–270), bishop of Neocæsarea. Certain of its clauses are as follows: "There is one God, Father of Him who is the living Word, subsisting Wisdom and Power and Eternal Impress. . . . There is one Lord alone of the alone, God of God, Impress and Image of the Godhead, the operative Word. . . . And there is one Holy Ghost, who hath his being of God, who hath appeared through the Son, Image of the Son, Perfect of the Perfect . . . a perfect Trinity, not divided nor alien in glory and eternity and dominion."[12] Contrast with this the creed of Cæsarea, brought to Nicæa in 325 by Eusebius, its bishop. "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things both visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the only begotten Son, the First-born of every Creature, begotten of the Father before all worlds, by whom also all things were made. Who for our salvation was made flesh, and lived amongst men and suffered and rose again on the third day, and ascended to the Father, and shall come in glory to judge the quick and the dead. And we believe in One Holy Ghost."[13]

Thus far I have mentioned only those creeds which were in use before the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan, or our so-called Nicene Creed, became the standard of orthodoxy in about the year 400.[14] I have done this to show that

[12] A. V. G. Allen, *Christian Institutions*, p. 285.
[13] A. V. G. Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 286.
[14] Strictly after Chalcedon, 451.

there was probably no attempt in these early days to enforce uniformity of creed, that certain clauses apparently vital in the West were omitted in the East,[15] and that the mood of the region, whether highly emotional, or theological, or matter-of-fact, was given free play. And I have selected creeds used by individuals whose orthodoxy was not called in question and who mingled freely and on equal terms with other Christians of the Empire. Picture, if you will, the City of Boston using as a Baptismal test the Old Roman Creed and the City of Chicago the creed of Eusebius, both cities belonging to the same Church, and you will have a parallel case. Without question both East and West and every section of East and West accepted the fundamental details of the Christian tradition, but certain of them looked upon one group as of primary importance and others upon another group.

In these early days the creeds were used for baptismal purposes only; they had not been added to the developing Eucharist or Mass. One illustration must suffice to show the place given the creed in the baptismal rites of East and West. Although the example is Roman, it would, with only slight changes, hold of the East. The baptismal ceremony lasted more than a week, sometimes throughout Lent, ending early Easter morning. Within that period there was the following order: Enrollment of names, sign of the cross and imposition of hands, blessing and giving of salt, first and second scrutinies or examinations, evil spirits exorcised by acolytes, third scrutiny, exposition of Gospels, giving of Creed, giving of Lord's Prayer, fourth and fifth and sixth scrutinies, on Easter Eve the seventh scrutiny, exorcism by priest, touching ears and nostrils with saliva, anointing back and breast with oil; finally the renunciation of the world and the devil and the repetition of the Creed; then, somewhat later, the baptism.

[15] E.g., Born of the Virgin Mary.

During baptismal services the creed was used in a triple manner: As the object of instruction; as the content of the Faith handed to the novitiate; and as a statement to be repeated as a confession. It continued to be used solely in these ways until well on into the early mediæval period. It was not part of either Eastern or Western service of Holy Communion.

It is possible that the introduction of infant baptism by the beginning of the fifth century may have been the cause of the gradual addition of the creeds to the major services of the Church, while retaining them in the baptismal offices. It is possible also that the abandonment (c. 350) of the custom of holding the services of Baptism and Holy Communion in secret (Disciplina arcani) may have hastened the change. At any rate, their introduction occurs at the end of the first century of imperial patronage of the Church, and consequently at the end of about a century of the practice of infant baptism.

This significant change in the use of creeds took place, therefore, during the period of the first four general Councils (325–451). Conciliar recognition, culminating in about the middle of the fifth century, made the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed (Nicene) the official declaration of faith. It was inevitable, therefore, that it should sooner or later gain headway in East and West as a baptismal Creed, and it was probable that it would become the outward sign, in the liturgies, of membership in the Church Universal.

"Theodore the Reader tells of its first appearance. He says that Peter the Fuller, Monophysite patriarch of Antioch (476–488), began the practice of saying the creed at every service and that Timothy of Constantinople (512–517), 'ordered that the Symbol of the faith of the 318 Fathers should be said at every service, as an insinuation that Macedonius [his orthodox predecessor] did not accept the Creed, for it had formerly been said only once

a year, on the occasion of the catechetical instructions given by the Bishop on Good Friday.' "[16]

It is interesting to note that what was gradually to become a widespread custom of the Church was initiated by the desire of a heretic to protest against any elaboration of the doctrine of the Nicene Creed. "The custom spread rapidly in the East, and by 600 it was adopted in Spain, by 800 in Gaul."[17] However, it must not be supposed that the use of the Nicene Creed in the Mass became universal at once. It was natural that it should pass from Spain to Gaul, the Visigoths being in control of both sides of the Pyrenees. It was natural also that Charlemagne should espouse the Eastern Creed, with the addition "and the Son,"[18] which he found in use in new Frankish territory. His attempt to press upon Pope Leo III the altered Nicene Creed failed, the Pope preferring to retain the original form. It was not until much later that Rome yielded to the practice prevailing in the North. "The custom of chanting the Creed (in what we now call the Mass) was not introduced at Rome until the first half of the eleventh century. Bernon, Abbot of Reichenau, relates that in his presence the Emperor Henry II induced Pope Benedict VIII (1012–1024) to adopt this custom; before this it was unknown to the Roman Church.[19] It is safe to say that its adoption by Rome hastened its reception throughout the West, although it had been sung at Mass in England at an earlier date.[20]

In the meantime what had become of the Apostles' Creed? It remained unknown in the Eastern Church. It continued as the generally recognized creed of the Western Church, in Baptismal services, until the begin-

[16] Quoted from Turner, *op. cit.*, pp. 48, 49. Cf. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 84.

[17] Neil and Willoughby, *Tutorial Prayer Book*, p. 304.

[18] See page 21.

[19] Duchesne, p. 172.

[20] Proctor and Frere, p. 389.

ning of the Byzantine period (c. 500). The political prestige of the East, coupled with the weight given to the Nicene Creed by the action of the councils, and the obvious advantage of this creed in countries exposed to Arianism, brought the Nicene Creed into use and forced the Apostles' Creed into the background. With the waning of Byzantine influence (c. 700), and with the growing independence of the Visigoths and Franks, the Apostles' Creed appeared again. It is found in Spain in the middle of the seventh century[21] in the writings of Ildefonsus and, in a slightly different form, in the Mozarabic Liturgy in the service for Palm Sunday, possibly a few years earlier in date. It was evidently in the old Gallican Service-books. It was accepted by Charlemagne and his scholars, and through their labors its spread throughout the West was hastened.

Except in rare instances, such as that mentioned above, the Apostles' Creed does not appear in the Mass. Rather it is confined to the "Psalters"[22] and the Breviaries. In Anglo-Saxon days it is found in the daily suffrages of prime and compline, following the continental use. "The old practice in the Sarum Breviary was for the priest alone and inaudibly to recite the creed till the last clause (et vitam aeternam), when he raised his voice as a signal to the choir that they were to join with him in saying it."[23] The Athanasian Creed was the publicly used creed of the Sarum Use. In the reformed Breviary of Cardinal Quignon (1536) the Athanasian Creed was to be said on Sundays, the Apostles' Creed on week days. It was from the Breviary that our Morning and Evening Prayer were taken, and consequently from the Breviary that the Apostles' Creed was taken also. The evolution is interesting and significant. The Breviary is an outgrowth of the scrutinies, or brief services preparatory to baptism in

[21] Swainson, p. 164.
[22] A form of Service-book.
[23] *Tutorial Prayer Book*, p. 109.

the early mediæval Church; the creed is a part of the Baptismal Service; they are kept together, forming the basis of the monastic "hours"; they issue in the reformed Breviary of Rome and in the widely different Morning and Evening Prayer of the Anglican Communion.

Such are the varied uses of the creeds in pre-Reformation days. They appear as local baptismal confessions of faith. Whereas they all probably presuppose a common content of the Faith, they express such aspects of it as are most appropriate to the temperament and the problems of the region whence they spring. For virtually five centuries they are used almost solely for baptismal purposes. Only in rare instances, and in none before 475, do we find a creed in the principal services of the Church. The Apostles' Creed is largely a baptismal, monastic and clerical creed until the time of the Reformation. The Nicene Creed gains entrance into the Eucharist, or Mass, in the late fifth century, slowly wins its way by virtue of its excellence and its anti-heretical purpose until finally it is a characteristic of the Liturgies in East and West, as it is today.

III

At present the demand for liturgical change is strong. It is already insistent in England; in this country it is rapidly gathering momentum. In grappling with the problems incident to change it is an advantage to be independent of the present and to be able to examine them in a right perspective. We must be aware of a changing past; we must count upon a changing future. In days when it is hard to image in undisputed communion two churches whose liturgies are different, it is well to remember that Milan has through all these centuries cherished its own Use as well as its Roman obedience. And at a time when one hesitates to suggest creedal modification it is refreshing to learn that there was a day when the Nicene Creed was as unknown in the West as the Apostles'

Creed in the East. In fact our ecclesiastical memories are very short. We in America have forgotten that we ourselves unwittingly followed the advice of Gregory the Great and made our own book, and that we even dropped from it one of the three great Western Creeds—the Athanasian. True Catholicism has been hospitable to diversity of certain kinds; it is possible that true Catholicism may be hospitable to variety of the same and other kinds.

It may be an assistance in dealing with problems of creedal change, involving as they do differences in theological point of view, to note a single instance of latitude allowed by our Prayer Book. In the Form and Manner of Ordering Priests the bishop may say: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained, etc." Or, the bishop may say: "Take thou Authority to exercise the office of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the Imposition of our hands, etc." Both sentences stand in the Prayer Book. A good churchman may make his choice without criticism. I have recently heard a bishop express his preference for the former, but, because of the desire of those to be ordained, he used the latter. And yet the alternative represents widely differing points of view. They may be practically as far asunder as frank Romanism and extreme Protestantism. The first is what might be called sacerdotal; the second contains only the meaning intended by the participants.

Such an alternative adds strength to the Prayer Book. It allows freedom to the "advanced" churchman and to his fellows of different point of view. It is altogether catholic. It is as it should be. It makes it honestly possible for more than one type of mind to use the same book.

If, however, the time should come when the Church might be willing to accept a creedal alternative, the new

form must embody much of the character and the tradition which make our present creeds so precious. It must be a formulary that will at once gather up the heart of the creeds, embody the cherished opinion of the past, and be couched in chastened religious language. I have thus far seen no proposed creed that would meet this catholic test. However, the ancient baptismal summaries are not far from satisfying the modern demand. They should be carefully studied. The following is a composite example:

Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty?
Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ and in his cross?
Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost?[24]

Our Catechism summary of the Apostles' Creed has many of the necessary qualities:

"First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world;
Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind;
Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the people of God."

Obviously such confessions are more appropriate to baptismal services than to Morning and Evening Prayer and the Holy Communion. But as confessions they have been hallowed by centuries of religious experience. They might be modified into creedal form.

The historical warrant for the permissive use of the creeds is found in the fact that they were not always thought essential to public worship, and that for many centuries they did not appear in the Mass throughout the East and the West. There is no *a priori* reason why the creeds today should not be confined to Baptism. But the warrant is even more cogently found in the freedom allowed the early churches to make their own religious emphasis. Without question the emphasis was generally

[24] Ducheane, p. 131; Maclean, *Ancient Church Orders*, p. 104.

an elaboration of certain universally accepted clauses in the creeds, but not always. If we assume that the liturgy itself embodied the essentials of the Faith the constant repetition of a creed was not necessary either to orthodoxy or to catholicity. If we assume that our own Liturgy embodies the essentials of the Faith, it is at least a possible inference that creeds may be a voluntary part of the service.

There are, moreover, practical reasons for suggesting the permissive use of the Creeds. There is already a demand for a limited permissive use. In the "Proposals for the Revision of the (English) Book of Common Prayer and for Additional Services and Prayers, drawn up by a Group of Clergy,"[25] the rubric for creedal use in Morning and Evening Prayer reads as follows: "All standing, there shall be said by the Minister and People, at the least on the Great Festivals, The Apostles' Creed" (beginning with "We believe"). In the Holy Communion the rubric is as follows: "Then, on Sundays and the Chief Festivals shall be said or sung, at one celebration of the Holy Communion at the least, this Confession of our Christian Faith" (the Nicene Creed beginning with "We believe").[26] This "group of clergy," for whose proposed revisions the Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Temple, has written a foreword, value the creeds. In fact they suggest that the Apostles' Creed be recited by Minister, Parents and Godparents during the Baptismal Office. Apparently, however, they do not look upon the creeds as essential to the integrity of either Morning or Evening Prayer or the Holy Communion. Frequent omission may be quite

[25] *A New Prayer Book*, Oxford University Press, London, 1923.

[26] Cf. rubric in The First Book of Edward VI—"When the holy Communion is celebrated on the workday, or in private houses, then may be omitted the Gloria in Excelsis, the Creed, the Homily, and the Exhortation, etc." Also the Rev. Percy Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 73. "It is my duty to add . . . that I think we now ought to go back to the older liturgical tradition and not make the Creeds a necessary feature of all our services."

advisable. They are not only true to history in making these suggestions, but they reflect the feeling of many loyal Churchmen on this side of the Atlantic. Such freedom would go far toward meeting the occasional demand for brevity; it would also serve to satisfy the moods of congregations that differ widely in temperament.

An unlimited permissive use of the creeds would, possibly, serve the same and an even greater purpose. Freedom does not necessarily mean disuse. In many cases it may issue in disuse. On the other hand, freedom leaves to the corporate Christian conscience of a locality the liberty to decide whether the creeds are appropriate to a service, whether they minister to the needs of a particular group and whether in the opinion of that group they are of primary importance to the Christian Faith. To change the rubric before the creeds from "Then *shall* be said the Apostles' or the Nicene Creed" to "Then *may* be said," is merely to expose the creeds to that wholesome struggle for existence which will in time secure for them their proper place. It must not be forgotten that many of those who are pleading for permissive use are those to whom the creeds are of permanent spiritual value.

THE FOLLOWING BOOKS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Liturgy of the Primitive Church, R. M. Woolley, B.D., Cambridge University Press, 1910.

The Ancient Church Orders, A. J. Maclean, D.D., Cambridge University Press, 1910.

The Offices of Baptism and Confirmation, T. Thompson, M.A., Cambridge University Press, 1914.

The Early History of the Liturgy, J. H. Srawley, D.D., Cambridge University Press, 1913.

The History of the Use of Creeds and Anathemas in the Early Church, C. H. Turner, S.P.C.K., London, 1910.

Christian Worship, Mgr. L. Duchesne; translation, M. C. McClure, S.P.C.K., London, 1903.

History of the Book of Common Prayer, Proctor and Frere, Macmillan, London, 1914.

The Tutorial Prayer Book, Neil and Willoughby, Harrison Trust, London, 1912.

III

THE SCRIPTURES AND THE APOSTLES' CREED, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

By

William Henry Paine Hatch

SYNOPSIS

The Bible in the Episcopal Church—Scripture and tradition—The Bible and the Protestant Churches—Scripture and the Apostles' Creed—The Apostles' Creed and the miraculous birth of Christ—The purpose of the article on Christ's birth—The supernatural birth in the Gospel of Matthew—The miraculous birth in the Gospel of Luke—The question of excising Luke 1:34, 35—A variant reading in Matthew 1:16—The meaning of "begat" in Matthew's genealogy—The genealogy in the Gospel of Luke—Sole evidence for the supernatural birth in the New Testament—The miraculous birth no part of early Apostolic preaching and not mentioned by Paul, Mark, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, or the fourth Evangelist—The tradition of a natural birth in the Gospels according to Matthew, Luke, and John—Pauline Christology and the supernatural birth—Johannine Christology and the miraculous birth—The Jewish legend of Jesus' illegitimacy—Two traditions in the New Testament in regard to the birth of Christ.

III

THE SCRIPTURES AND THE APOSTLES' CREED, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

We are to discuss in the present essay the Scriptures and the Apostles' Creed. This is no mere academic question. On the contrary it is a matter of vital importance, for in the Anglican Communion the Bible takes precedence over both of the historic creeds of the Church. This principle is expressly stated in the Eighth Article of Religion, which reads as follows: "The *Nicene* Creed, and that which is commonly called the *Apostles'* Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." In other words the authority of the Bible is primary, and whatever authority the creeds have in our Church is secondary and derivative.

This fact is also made clear in the ordinal. The question addressed by the bishop to the candidate for the priesthood is this: "Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all Doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined, out of the said Scriptures, to instruct the people committed to your charge; and to teach nothing, as necessary to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture?" The same question, with a few slight and unimportant verbal changes, is put to a bishop-elect at his consecration. It is important to note in passing that the form of the question implies the right and duty of individual interpretation on the part of both priest and

bishop. Such interpretation should of course be based on diligent study and the use of all available knowledge. Indeed, the candidate for the priesthood must promise at the time of his ordination that he will be "diligent . . . in such studies as help to the knowledge" of the Holy Scriptures; and the bishop-elect must declare that he will "faithfully exercise" himself "in the Holy Scriptures, and call upon God by prayer for the true understanding of the same." In this matter of the authority of the Bible our Church is in complete accord with the Protestant Reformers of the sixteenth century.

Almost from the very beginning Christian teachers were obliged to combat erroneous doctrines, and from the second century onwards it was customary for them to appeal to the ever-increasing body of tradition in support of what they believed to be the truth. The Christian faith was looked upon as a sacred deposit, committed by Christ to the Apostles, who passed it on to the bishops of the various churches scattered throughout the world. The bishops in turn dispensed it to the faithful, whose duty it was to accept it on authority. Tradition and Scripture were thought to be in perfect agreement. The former made explicit that which was implicit in the latter. Orthodox Christians read the Bible through the spectacles of the Fathers. The creeds of the Church and the decrees of ecclesiastical councils made its divine mysteries intelligible.

Upon such a foundation was the dogmatic and moral theology of the mediæval Church built. It was a structure as imposing in its way as the great cathedrals of Europe; and as a product of the human intellect it will bear comparison with the hypotheses of modern science. As an exact and logical thinker, Thomas Aquinas, the ablest and most learned of the Schoolmen, is unsurpassed by any modern philosopher or theologian. What distinguishes the mediæval world from our own is not a difference in intellectual power. It is rather this, namely that the old

presuppositions and methods have been abandoned, and new views and different methods have been adopted. In consequence of this a new world has come into being.

Sacred Scripture and the tradition of the Church, both considered infallible and of divine authority, constituted a twofold standard of truth; and the Apostles' Creed, being regarded as a convenient compendium of the faith, was a not unimportant part of the ecclesiastical tradition. The creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, representing respectively faith, devotion, and ethics, were the three forms in which Christian teaching was commonly presented to the laity.[1] Each one was considered an adequate summary in its own field.

The twofold norm of truth above-mentioned maintained its position in the Church down to the Protestant revolt in the sixteenth century. At that time a spirit of inquiry into the past was abroad, and the Reformers, in varying degrees, were imbued with it. They recognized an essential difference between Scripture and tradition, and they boldly and resolutely rejected the idea that the latter had equal authority with the former in establishing Christian doctrine. In this they were following the example of Christ, who did essentially the same thing when he annulled the traditions of the Jewish elders. The Bible consequently became the sole authority in Protestantism; and upon it, at least in principle, the Protestant Churches were reared.

When the present writer speaks of the Bible, he is not thinking of it as an infallible authority in matters of faith and morals, nor even as a collection of canonical books. The question of the inspiration of the Scriptures need not be raised. The writings contained in the New Testament are not only human documents of primary importance from the point of view of religion; they are also our only sources for the life and thought of the Church

[1] See the conclusions of the offices for the Public Baptism of Infants and the Private Baptism of Children in the Prayer Book.

in the earliest period. They are indeed the products of the Christian movement, brought into existence by its vitality and power; and it is to them that we must go in the first instance for an understanding of primitive Christianity.

The precedence of Scripture over the creed is certainly justified from the historical point of view. For not only are the books of the Bible older than the creed,[2] but the various articles of the latter are obviously based on the former. In other words, the creed is only a secondary authority. In its earliest form it was a baptismal symbol —a test of faith for those who sought admission into the Christian fold. It contains the things which, it was thought, every Christian ought to know and believe unto his soul's health. The framers of it were not speaking on their own authority or by divine inspiration. They were merely repeating, in a brief and convenient form, what the Scriptures seemed to them to teach concerning certain fundamental questions. Several of the facts of Christ's life mentioned in the creed were believed by the Christians of the second century to have been predicted by the Hebrew prophets.

Moreover, the New Testament is replete with the spirit of early Christianity, and various aspects of Christian life and thought are reflected in its pages. The creed, on the other hand, gives only the barest outline of what was believed by Christians after the close of the Apostolic Age. If we had no other sources of information, we should have a very inadequate picture of Christianity in the second and following centuries.

The creed obviously omits much that was of vital importance in regard to Christ. It passes from his birth to

[2] II Peter, the latest of the books of the New Testament, should probably be assigned to the third quarter of the second century (150–175 A.D.). The earliest form of the Apostles' Creed was probably drawn up in Rome about the middle of the same century. The two documents are quite independent of each other.

his passion without mentioning or alluding to the intervening facts of his life or the main points of his teaching. Even the Kingdom of God, the central and coördinating idea in his preaching, is ignored. Moreover, nothing is said about his Davidic lineage, his Messiahship, or his redemptive work. The creed recounts only those facts in the life of Christ which seemed for some reason to require mention or emphasis. Some of the points specified were subjects of controversy at the time when the document was drawn up. It was intended as a baptismal confession, and some of the articles may have been used in the instruction of converts. It was not meant to be a complete statement of the Christian faith, like the Westminster Confession of 1648.

Time and space will not permit us to discuss all the articles of the Apostles' Creed. We shall therefore limit ourselves to the statement that Christ was miraculously conceived and born, and we shall study the various passages of Scripture on which it is based. Our aim will be to ascertain what the Scriptural writers really meant, and whether the framers of the creed correctly understood the Biblical statements. We shall also have to ask and answer another question, namely whether there are other passages of Scripture which teach a different view. If it should turn out that there is clearly a Scriptural conflict in regard to any of the articles of the creed, obviously it cannot be held, in a Protestant church, that the doctrine enunciated in the article is the only admissible one. The New Testament, with which of course we are chiefly concerned in the present discussion, often contains more than one view or interpretation of a given subject. Such differences the makers of the creed could not take into account, even if they were aware of their existence. They were stating what seemed to them the fundamental facts and doctrines of the Christian faith. Nevertheless, they had no authority to make or unmake Christian truth.

The Apostles' Creed declares that Christ "was conceived

by the Holy Ghost" and "born of the Virgin Mary." The two clauses taken together assert the supernatural method of Jesus' coming into the world and his divine origin. Either alone would have sufficed to distinguish him from the rest of mankind. But the clause referring to the agency of the Holy Spirit may have been lacking in the earliest form of the creed.[3] If so, it was probably added towards the end of the second century or early in the third. It was, however, a natural and justifiable addition, for the Holy Spirit is mentioned in connection with the birth of Jesus in both Matthew and Luke.[4] If the pronouncements of the Hebrew prophets had any influence on the formulation of the creed, the omission of a reference to the agency of the Holy Spirit may be due to the fact that no ancient prophecy could be cited in support of the idea.

What then was the original import of the declaration that Christ was "born of the Virgin Mary," or, to preserve the order of the words in Greek, "of Mary the virgin"? In order to answer this question, we must bear in mind two facts: first, that there were in the second century not a few who denied the reality of Jesus' life, regarding him as a kind of phantom; and second, that the Apostles' Creed is believed by some scholars to have been framed to combat this particular form of error. This heresy was called Docetism, and those who held it were known as Docetists. The fact to be emphasized by the orthodox was not that Jesus was born *of a virgin,* but that he was *really* born.[5] So far as the controversy with the Docetists

[3] Cf. McGiffert, *The Apostles' Creed,* pp. 91*f.* A reconstruction of the original text of the Apostles' Creed in its earliest form can be seen on p. 100 of Dr. McGiffert's book. It is only fair to say that Kattenbusch, in his great work entitled *Das apostolische Symbol,* i. pp. 64 and 75, thinks the Holy Spirit was mentioned in this article in the earliest form of the creed.

[4] Cf. Mt. 1:20; Lk. 1:35.

[5] Ignatius twice speaks of Christ as being *truly* born (*Tral.* 9:1; *Smyr.* 1:1). In the latter passage he adds "of a virgin."

was concerned, it was the fact, and not the manner, of the birth that mattered. It is true that Paul's phrase, "born of a woman,"[6] would have served the purpose equally well; but the framers of the creed naturally preferred the more definite statement, "born of Mary the virgin," which was based on the narratives of Jesus' birth in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Moreover, it was believed to have been predicted in the prophet Isaiah that the Messiah should be born of a virgin.

There can be no doubt that most Christians in the second century believed that Christ was born of a virgin mother.[7] Being a part of the Gospel story, the miraculous birth passed with other evangelic material into the stream of Christian tradition and was commonly accepted. However, it is rarely mentioned before the time of Justin, who suffered martyrdom in Rome between 163 and 167 A.D.[8] In view of this fact it can hardly have been regarded as an essential article of the Christian faith.

Let us now turn to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, in which the miraculous birth of Jesus is narrated. Matthew relates that when Mary had been found to be with child of the Holy Spirit and Joseph was minded to put her away secretly, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying: "Fear not to take Mary, thy betrothed,

[6] Gal. 4:4. It is idle to find a reference to the virgin birth in this verse. Dr. Burton (*The Epistle to the Galatians*, 1920, p. 217) says: "The phrase γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός can not be interpreted, as excluding human paternity, as some interpreters, both ancient and modern, have maintained. . . . It could be reasonably supposed to imply birth from a virgin only in case it were otherwise established that the apostle knew and accepted the dogma or narrative that Jesus was so born, and not even then would it be certain that this phrase was intended to refer to this aspect of Jesus' birth. But of such knowledge or acceptance the writings of the apostle give no hint."

[7] Some, however, apparently did not accept this miracle. Cf. Justin, *Dial.* 48. He speaks of those who held that Jesus "was born a man of men" as being "of our race," i.e., Christians.

[8] Ignatius speaks of it twice (*Eph.* 19:1; *Smyr.* 1:1) and Aristides once (*Apol. Syr.*, ed. Harris, p. 3).

to thy home; for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit." The evangelist, who views various incidents in the life of Jesus as fulfillments of ancient prophecies, goes on to explain that this all happened in order that the Lord's word as announced by Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel."[9]

The general import of this passage is so clear that no comment is necessary. Jesus' conception is portrayed as supernatural or miraculous, being effected without the intervention of a human father. The place of the latter was taken by the Holy Spirit. This narrative, in the opinion of the present writer, is a true part of the Gospel in which it stands. It is unnecessary and unjustifiable to regard Chapters I and II as a later addition to the Gospel.

The idea that the Messiah was miraculously born probably did not originate with the First Evangelist. He incorporated in his work many Palestinian traditions, and this was doubtless one of them. When or how it arose we do not know. The history of religions shows that the idea of a person's being born of a virgin is not an uncommon one. Many heroes and great men are said to have been born in this way.[10] We are not concerned at present with the origin of the idea, whether it was Jewish or pagan. However, it seems to the writer quite possible that it may have developed out of the prophecy found in Isaiah 7:14, just as some other features of the infancy stories probably grew out of other Old Testament passages.

[9] Mt. 1:18*ff*. Matthew (1:23) follows the Greek version of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint, which renders the Hebrew word 'almāh in Isaiah 7:14 by "virgin" (παρθένος). 'Almāh, however, does not have the specific sense of "virgin," but means simply a "young woman." For "virgin" an entirely different word is used (bethūlāh).

[10] Cf. Wettstein, *Novum Testamentum*, i., p. 236. See also Hartland, *The Legend of Perseus*, i., pp. 71*ff*.

Hence many scholars regard these narratives as early Christian legends.

Luke is fond of parallelism, and in his Gospel we read of two wonderful births—that of John the Baptist and that of Jesus. John was born of a barren mother when both of his parents were "well stricken in years."[11] In this respect Isaac, Samson, and Samuel are Old Testament prototypes of John. But Jesus' mother was a virgin. The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she has found favor with God, and that she will bear a son, to whom "the Lord God will give the throne of his father David." Mary replies, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" Then Gabriel tells her plainly that the Holy Spirit will come upon her, and that the child to be born will be called the Son of God.[12] In both cases the birth is extraordinary and contrary to human experience; but to the evangelist these events are credible because all things are possible with God.

Some scholars would excise Luke 1:34, 35 as an interpolation put into the text after the Gospel was composed. All manuscripts and ancient versions contain these two verses;[13] but it is claimed that the context of the passage is improved by omitting them. Since the first two chapters of Luke are probably based on a Semitic original, Hebrew or Aramaic, it has also been supposed that Luke himself added 1:34, 35 as he translated his source; for the idea expressed in verse 35 seems to some writers to be un-Semitic. However, in view of the hovering or brooding of the Spirit of God upon the face of the waters in Genesis 1:2, it can hardly be denied that "to come upon" and "to overshadow" are appropriate verbs, from the Hebraic point of view, to denote the action of the Holy Spirit in Luke 1:35.

The question raised in connection with these two verses

[11] Cf. Lk. 1:7.
[12] Cf. ibid., 1:30*ff*.
[13] Lk. 1:16–38 is unfortunately missing in the Old Syriac version.

we must leave unanswered. It is important, however, to recognize that it is very much easier to regard these two verses of Luke as an interpolation than to relegate the first two chapters of Matthew to the category of additions.[14] In any case we may be sure that Luke 1:34, 35 was part of the Gospel before the Apostles' Creed was drawn up. The latter seems to be chiefly dependent upon the Third Gospel and the Acts.[15]

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke both contain genealogies of Jesus. These genealogies differ in certain respects, and they are differently placed in the two Gospels; but they agree in tracing the Lord's descent through Joseph. In each case the author's purpose is to prove that Jesus belonged to the lineage of David; for it was commonly believed, in accordance with certain prophetic utterances, that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David. Let us consider the genealogies separately.

In Matthew 1:16 the following is a very ancient reading: "Jacob begat Joseph; Joseph, to whom was espoused Mary a virgin, begat Jesus who is called the Messiah."[16] The ordinary reading, which is supported by our oldest and best Greek manuscripts, is this: "Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Messiah." It is difficult to determine which of these texts best represents the autograph, and first-class scholars are ranged on both sides of the question. How-

[14] Moffatt (*Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*[3], p. 251) says: "The birth-narratives in Matthew and Luke stand thus on a different footing. In the latter, the omission of a word or two (in 1:34–35) leaves the narrative fairly consecutive and intelligible. In the former, no hypothesis of literary criticism or textual emendation can disentangle the conception of a virgin-birth from a story which is wrought together and woven on one loom."

[15] Cf. Jackson and Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, ii., pp. 199*f*.

[16] This reading is found only in the Sinaitic form of the Old Syriac version, though certain other ancient authorities have preserved a similar text. The Old Syriac version was made about 200 A.D. or earlier. The reading in question was adopted by Von Soden, on whose text Dr. Moffatt's translation of the New Testament is based.

ever, the present writer inclines to the belief that the first-mentioned reading is to be preferred. It is hard to see why anyone should introduce such a correction into the Gospel in view of the account of the miraculous birth in 1:18*ff.*; whereas it was easy and natural to reconcile the birth narrative and the genealogy by making a simple alteration in the text of the latter.

At first sight the genealogy traced through Joseph seems to preclude the idea that Jesus was born of a virgin; and if the Old Syriac reading is adopted in Matthew 1:16, the natural birth of Christ appears to be definitely asserted. But the matter is not so simple as it looks. For it is held by some scholars that the word "begat" (ἐγέννησεν) in the genealogy denotes legal, and not physical, descent.[17] In other words, the evangelist means that Jesus stood in the legal relationship of son to Joseph. If so, the genealogy, with either of the above-mentioned readings in verse 16, is not in conflict with the account of Jesus' birth which follows immediately after it.

The word "begat," however, probably has its natural and usual meaning here. It is true that the compiler of the genealogy sometimes passes over several intervening generations, making a man "beget" one of his descendants instead of his own son. Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 100) says: "For we know that those who beget women are the fathers of the children who are born to their daughters." This is physical descent. The First Evangelist seems to have taken a similar view of descendants in the male line.

If the word "begat" is used in its ordinary sense, the genealogy is logically inconsistent with the story of the miraculous birth, whichever of the above-mentioned readings is adopted in Matthew 1:16; for in either case the genealogy is traced through Joseph. Some think the in-

[17] Cf. Wescott and Hort, *Introduction*[2], appendix, p. 141; Burkitt, *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, ii., p. 260; Lewis, *The Old Syriac Gospels*, pp. xiv*ff.*; Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Matthew*, p. 6.

sistency, though real and obvious to us, was not felt by the evangelist; whilst others regard either the genealogy or the birth narrative as a later addition to the Gospel. The present writer agrees with those who think the author of the Gospel, like most of his readers, was not troubled by the inconsistency.

There is no reason for supposing that the genealogy ever existed apart from the Gospel of Matthew. It is in all probability the author's own compilation. It is highly artificial, and it cannot be an actual pedigree of Christ running back to Abraham. The evangelist clearly believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the son of David, and also that he was supernaturally born of a virgin named Mary.

Concerning the genealogy given in the Gospel of Luke less need be said. It is undoubtedly the product of Jewish Christian industry, though the misspelling of Hebrew proper names makes it probable that the genealogy was worked over by a Gentile. It has no more claim to be regarded as an actual pedigree of Jesus than the genealogy of Matthew. In Luke the line is traced back of Abraham to Adam, who is called the son of God. This is in keeping with the Pauline idea that Christ was the last Adam, and it represents Luke's Gentile view of Christ just as the descent from Abraham illustrates Matthew's Jewish Christian point of view.

Luke says that Jesus was "the son, as was supposed, of Joseph." The word "son" (υἱός) emphasizes the ethical and legal aspects of sonship, and one might suppose that it has this connotation in Luke 3:23. But this idea is precluded by the clause "as was supposed." Indeed these words were inserted by Luke for the purpose of making the genealogy compatible with the story of the miraculous birth, which the evangelist himself believed.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke furnish the only evidence to be found in the New Testament for the idea that Jesus was born of a virgin mother; and, in the opinion

of the present writer, it is not possible to remove this idea from either of these documents by critical or exegetical means. The birth narratives in the First and Third Gospels are the sole Scriptural authority for the statement of the Apostles' Creed that Christ "was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

According to Acts the burden of the Apostles' preaching was the Messiahship of Jesus; but no one in the beginning seems to have thought of him as having been born of a virgin. Moreover, the Epistles of Paul, which are the earliest writings of the New Testament, contain no mention of the miraculous birth.[18] It is not alluded to in any way. Indeed the Apostle's view of Christ is such that the idea found in Matthew and Luke is excluded. The Gospel of Mark, which was the first of our Gospels to be written, and which was used by Matthew and Luke as one of their principal sources, makes no reference to the supernatural conception and birth of Jesus. It begins with the mission of John the Baptist and says nothing about the infancy or childhood of Christ. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who thought of Christ as the Son of God and the Christians' great High-priest, nowhere refers to or implies the miraculous birth. Again, the author of the Fourth Gospel never speaks of Jesus as having been born in any but a natural way. This is certainly not due to a low estimate of Christ's person, for the Fourth Evangelist adopted the Logos idea to explain the life and work of Jesus. His thought moves in an entirely different sphere from that of Matthew and Luke. Finally, in the recorded sayings of Jesus himself there is not the slightest hint that he was conceived or born in a supernatural manner.[19]

The silence of the important New Testament writers

[18] See note 6 above.

[19] It is idle to find in the reply of the child Jesus to his parents in Lk. 2:49 a reference to the miraculous birth. Cf. Klostermann in Lietzmann's *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament,* ii., I, p. 410.

mentioned above cannot be accounted for on the ground that they were acquainted with the doctrine in question, but for some reason chose to say nothing about it. Even if this were so, it must have been regarded by them as a matter of small moment. The truth is, certainly in the case of Paul, the writer to the Hebrews, and the author of the Fourth Gospel, that their thought about Christ is incompatible with the idea underlying the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke.

We must now ask whether there are any traces of a different view touching the birth of Jesus from that found in the First and Third Gospels. Do any of the New Testament writers countenance the idea that he was born in a natural way?[20]

In Jesus' lifetime it was commonly believed in Nazareth, "where he had been brought up," that he was the son of the carpenter Joseph, and no effort is made, either by Christ himself or by his disciples, to correct this view. Indeed this opinion is recorded without comment by both Matthew and Luke. According to the latter, Jesus came to Nazareth at the outset of his ministry, went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and preached to the people. They "wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth: and they said, Is not this Joseph's son?"[21]

Matthew relates that when Jesus came to Nazareth and taught in the synagogue, the people "were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary, and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not his sisters all with us?"[22]

[20] Dr. Frederic Palmer, in a recent book entitled "The Virgin Birth," pp. 7*ff*., discusses this question with great lucidity.

[21] Cf. Lk. 4:22.

[22] Cf. Mt. 13:55*f*. In Mk. 6:3, upon which Mt. 13:55 is based, the Greek text as usually read is to be translated thus: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, etc.?" But in some Greek, Latin, and Coptic manuscripts and in at least two minor ancient versions Jesus is referred to as "the son of the carpenter." This may well be the right reading.

In the second chapter of Luke, which is probably based on a Semitic original, Jesus' parents are mentioned three times,[23] and his human father twice.[24] The evangelist found these references in his source, and he thought it unnecessary to make any change or add any explanation.

In the Fourth Gospel Jesus is twice called the son of Joseph, and in neither case does the author correct or comment on the phrase.[25] If the Fourth Evangelist had believed in the supernatural birth, he would certainly have set the reader right, as he does in other cases. He has undoubtedly preserved in these two passages a tradition of a natural birth, which, as we have just seen, is embedded in the Synoptic account of Christ's ministry (Matthew, Luke, and perhaps Mark). To some scholars it seems not only earlier, but also more authentic than the view contained in the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke.

It has been pointed out above that Paul makes no reference to the miraculous birth of Jesus. The reason for the Apostle's silence is not far to seek. According to him, Christ was a divine spirit, who took the form of a servant and was born of a woman in this world, in order that he might effect the redemption of believers. He is the man from heaven, or the heavenly man. He was "begotten before every creature," and "in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth."[26] In other words, according to Paul, Christ existed in heaven before his earthly life. Such a conception of Christ is obviously incompatible with the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke. In these Jesus is conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He is at once human and divine, but there is no suggestion of a previous existence. On the contrary, he comes into being through the union of the Holy Spirit and his virgin mother.

[23] Cf. Lk. 2:27, 41, 43.
[24] Cf. Lk. 2:33, 48.
[25] Cf. John 1:45; 6:42.
[26] Cf. Col. 1: 15*f.*

The Christology of the Fourth Gospel is no less incompatible than that of Paul with the idea underlying the accounts of Jesus' birth in the First and Third Gospels. In the Fourth Gospel the eternal Word, which not only was with God, but actually was God, became flesh and tabernacled among men in the person of Jesus Christ. A writer holding this metaphysical conception could not at the same time believe that Christ came into being through the union of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. There is no place in the Johannine system of thought for a birth of this sort.

It is sometimes said that we are shut up to one or the other of two alternatives. Either Christ was supernaturally born after the manner described in the birth stories of Matthew and Luke, or he was an illegitimate son of Mary. It is hard to believe that this statement is made ingenuously, for it is obvious that he may also have been a legitimate son of Joseph and Mary.

The assertion that Jesus was born out of wedlock is an ancient Jewish calumny. It is worthy of note, however, that, so far as our sources inform us, Jesus' Jewish adversaries never made such a charge against him during his lifetime. When Christians, in their polemic against the Jews, claimed that their Master had been miraculously born of a virgin, they unintentionally gave their opponents an opportunity to retort in the way indicated. The earliest reference to this crude slander is found in Origen's work against Celsus, which was written about 248 A.D., near the end of Origen's life.[27] Celsus had related the story about seventy years earlier.

[27] Cf. *Contra Celsum* i., 28, 32. The idea that Jesus was an illegitimate child appears also in rabbinical literature. Cf. *Sanhedrin* 67*a*; *Shabbath* 104*b*. These passages are found only in uncensored copies of the Talmud. The story is elaborated in *Toledoth Jeshu' init.* The latter is a mediæval work containing incredible legends about the birth, miracles, and death of Christ. On the references to Jesus in the Talmud and in Midrashic works see Strack, *Jesus, die Häretiker und die Christen nach den ältesten jüdischen Angaben,* pp. 18**ff.*

No scholar, Jewish or Christian, regards the legend of Jesus' illegitimacy as anything but a fanciful tale, without the slightest historical foundation and wholly unworthy of credence. To suggest it in modern times as the only alternative to a miraculous birth is as illogical as it is irreverent.

It is clear from what has been said that in the New Testament, which is our ultimate authority in the matter, there are two traditions in regard to the birth of Christ. According to one he was miraculously born of a virgin mother; and according to the other he was the son of Joseph and Mary, the eldest child in a family consisting of four other sons and at least two daughters. The former of these traditions appears in the Apostles' Creed. However, it is either true or untrue without reference to the creed. As in all other historical questions, probability is here our sole guide. We must weigh the evidence carefully, and then make up our minds which view is more likely to be right. This is our duty as well as our privilege.

IV

THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND BELIEF IN CHRIST

By

Angus Dun

SYNOPSIS

Two questions involved—the question of historical fact and the question of doctrinal value and importance. Historical evidence not conclusive. Has the Virgin Birth essential connections with fundamental Christian convictions?

The Virgin Birth an almost universal belief among Christians since the second century. Doubts raised by the scientific spirit. A question as to how God acted, not whether He acted.

Various degrees of connection found between belief in the Virgin Birth and belief in Christ. The Nativity stories in Matthew and Luke interpret Christ as the new creation of the Spirit through the Virgin Mary. Absence of reference in the recorded teaching of Jesus. Absence of reference in the letters of St. Paul and in the Fourth Gospel, in which Christ is interpreted as the incarnation of a preexistent divine Being. Uncertainty as to the motives for including the Virgin Birth in the Apostles' and so-called Nicene Creeds.

Two principal theories as to the essential connection between the Virgin Birth and the nature of Christ: (1) essential to His sinlessness; (2) essential to a true incarnation.

The belief that the moral perfection of Christ required the Virgin Birth based on the belief that sin is a part of man's organic inheritance. The difficulties are great, granting the assumption, and the assumption is very questionable.

The belief that the Incarnation required the Virgin Birth is based on an interpretation of Christ as the incarnation of a preexistent divine Personality in an otherwise impersonal human nature. Again, the difficulties are great, granting the assumption. And history and the interests of religion indicate a full personal humanity in Christ.

The issue at stake is what Christ means to Christians. The Christian religion is the religion which finds in Christ the perfect revelation and the redeeming action of God. Christ's meaning expressed by Himself and His Jewish disciples in Messianic terms. The terms and thought forms of Greek Christianity shaped the classical expressions of His meaning. Absolute surrender and absolute obedience to Him the best witness to His divinity.

IV

THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND BELIEF IN CHRIST

THERE are two questions that can be asked about any assertion. One may ask, "Is the assertion true? Is it a fact? Is it a part of the real world?" Or one may ask, "What does it mean? What follows from it? What difference does it make?" With increasing insistence these questions are being asked concerning many of the established assertions of the Christian Churches, in particular about the assertion that the Lord Jesus Christ was born of a virgin. Is it true that Christ was born of a virgin? What meaning or importance attaches to the belief that Christ was born of a virgin?

Our consideration of these questions would be much simplified if we could separate them sharply, if we could hand over to the students of history and of the New Testament the historical question, "Was Christ born of a virgin?" and refer to students of Christian thought and experience the doctrinal question, "What importance attaches to the assertion that Christ was born of a virgin?" But the questions will not stay so neatly apart. The fact under discussion is a historical fact, an event located in a distant yesterday. And belief in a fact of yesterday, especially a distant yesterday, is rarely a pure matter of historical evidence. If you were told that yesterday the sun stood still, you would doubt the assertion, though your most trusted friend reported it. If you were told that your gentle and well-behaved brother shot his peaceable grandmother yesterday noon, you would want very good evidence before you would believe it. But if you were told that the tide was high at three o'clock on Thurs-

day last, or that the elderly Mrs. Jones died of pneumonia, very little evidence would be required to establish your belief. And the difference would be that some of these assertions would fit the world you already believed in and some would not. There is such a thing as overwhelming evidence for past events, which all but constrains belief, even in face of preconceptions against it. But it is rare, particularly in the case of events both exceptional and distant.

There may be those who believe that there is overwhelming historical evidence for the Virgin Birth quite apart from other considerations. Such persons must adjust their whole view of life to include that fact, just as many minds in the modern world have had to adjust their whole view of life to include the facts of evolution. If for any one the Virgin Birth occupies such an unassailable place in the world of fact, his only problem is to interpret its meaning, to discover if possible what it implies and what follows from it. And the presumption would be that so exceptional an event, in a setting so full of meaning and wonder, must possess a like exceptional significance.

But the fact is that when we turn to the historians and the students of the New Testament with the question, "Was Christ born of a virgin?" they do not give us any such overwhelming finality. They reply somewhat in this fashion: "We have examined all the available evidence bearing on the question you referred to us. We have studied the most ancient manuscripts. We have looked into the meaning of every separate word and sentence that might throw light on the question. We cannot agree as to the weight of the evidence. The more conservative among us believe that the evidence is good, though hardly overwhelming. The more radical among us think the narratives are plainly very beautiful Jewish-Christian folk-lore. Most of us consider the purely historical and literary evidence an insufficient basis for

an emphatic answer, and think that other than historical considerations must finally be admitted in order to tip the scales decisively."

So the question comes back from the students of history and the New Testament. It is not, most of them agree, an event supported by such an overwhelming weight of historical evidence that we must, if necessary, rebuild our whole world view in order to make a place for it. It is an event which will be believed or doubted or disbelieved according to the whole view of things with which the evidence is approached.[1]

The question, then, is whether a person who approaches this evidence with a Christian view of things in general will find such a clear or essential or reasonable connection between this reported event of the Virgin Birth of Christ and the whole body of his Christian convictions that the two will support and confirm each other. Can we say that the connection is so close and necessary that Christianity is not true unless the Virgin Birth occurred? Or, to give the matter a quite practical bearing, is the connection so clear that we can distinguish Christians from non-Christians according to whether they believe in the Virgin Birth of Christ?

There is an old rule for discovering true and essential Christian thinking according to which that is authoritative which has been believed "everywhere, always and by all." Belief in the Virgin Birth of Christ meets this

[1] Compare the opinion expressed by Bishop Gore in 1895: "The historical evidence for our Lord's birth of a virgin is in itself strong and cogent. But it is not such as to compel belief. . . . To produce belief there is needed—in this as in almost all other questions of historical fact—besides cogent evidence, also a perception of the meaning and naturalness, under the circumstances, of the event to which evidence is borne. To clinch the historical evidence for our Lord's virgin birth there is needed the sense, that being what He was, His human birth could hardly have been otherwise than is implied in the virginity of His mother." *Dissertations on Subjects Connected with the Incarnation,* p. 64.

test very much more completely than many other elements of traditional Christian teaching. During the greater part of Christian history it has been believed practically by all Christians everywhere. It is true that in the recorded teaching of Christ there is no mention of it, certainly no requirement of it as a condition of membership in the fellowship of His disciples. It is true that St. Paul's letters, the oldest Christian documents that we have, contain no reference to it in their varied witness to the supreme religious position of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true that the Gospel according to St. John, which interprets the life of Christ as the presence among men of the Eternal Word of God, bearing witness to Himself by so many signs and wonders, shows no knowledge of His birth of a virgin. But when we pass into the second century, certainly by the middle of the century,[2] we find the account of Christ's birth, as narrated in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, accepted by all Christian writers. From then on for fifteen hundred years it was an unchallenged part of the accepted Christian tradition. Throughout this long period it was believed by all orthodox teachers, and by many heretics alike. In the early centuries Paul of Samosata and Arius, two men whose views of Christ were most emphatically condemned by the Church, accepted the Virgin Birth without question. Mohammed, who founded the religion which is the most aggressive competitor of Christianity for world control, accepted it. Socinus, the forerunner of modern Unitarianism, did not doubt it. And throughout this long

[2] Though no great weight can be attached to it, it is interesting to recall that Justin Martyr, whose writings date from the middle of the second century and are a main source for our knowledge of the Christian thought of that period, held that the Virgin Birth was not an absolutely essential part of the Christian faith (First Apology, 22) and asserted that "there are some of our race (i.e. Christians, ed.) who admit that He is Christ, while holding Him to be man of men; with whom I do not agree" (Dialogue with Trypho, 48).

period and wide extent of unbroken agreement the belief was, of course, accepted in an altogether literal sense, namely that Christ had no human father.

The question may well be asked, What has happened to turn a belief so established and widespread into a stumbling-block and center of Christian controversy? This belief was held by Christendom, which eventually meant Western civilization, for fifteen hundred years, held without question by all branches of the Christian Church for almost eighteen hundred years. It is now probably rejected without question by most learned men outside the Churches throughout the world, rejected without question by large sections of the educated classes in so-called Christian countries, and also seriously questioned by many earnest scholars, teachers and lay people within conservative branches of the Christian Church. Is it all just one more evidence of how successful Satan has been in the modern world?

It is not easy to gather up in any phrase or simple statement that powerful something that has so altered the thinking of multitudes. Perhaps "the scientific spirit" best suggests it. For centuries the principle of authority largely governed men's thinking. To look for truth meant to inquire what the "great ones" had to say. And the "great ones" in turn looked back to authorities before them, to the Bible, to "the Fathers," and to the great teachers of ancient Greece. It would be untrue to say that there was no independent reflection and observation in those long centuries. There was much of it, much more than we in the provincial pride of our own age commonly admit. But it remains true that the principle of authority ruled over all, turning men's minds towards the past for truth, and carrying ancient legends and myths, ancient fragments of history and speculation and observation to succeeding generations in the sweep of its strong current. Then a change occurred and a new spirit began to take possession of men's thinking, what we call in a broad

way the scientific spirit. The essence of it can be expressed in various ways. It means that the place to look for truth is not in what has been said or written of old time but in the facts themselves. To discover the truth about the workings of the human body, look at the human body, inside and out, not at what men of old speculated about the human body. To discover the truth about the past history of the world, look at the rocks and the hills and the rivers and the seas, not at "the first book of Moses called Genesis." Observe! Go to experience! Test your observations by the observations and experiences of others! And then observe again! That new spirit has entered area after area of man's thinking: his thought of the stars, his thought of the beginnings of the world, his thought of his own body and his own mind, his thought of history, even of sacred history and the Bible, his thought of the mysteries of sainthood and even of the life of Christ. And if there be areas of human thinking that have shut this spirit out, or institutions and authorities that would bar the door to it or crush it, they are fighting a losing battle. It is a holy thing. Like other holy things, great evils have been committed in its name. In its name men have been dogmatic and cruel and destructive. Its servants, embittered by the opposition of the Church, have been convinced that religion is the great enemy of truth and progress. But in spite of all, this new spirit remains at heart a holy thing, man's passion for everlasting truth. And whoever fears its entrance or would bar it from holy ground is sinning against the Holy Spirit.

What has this scientific spirit done to alter the attitude of so many towards the established and universal belief of Christians in the Virgin Birth of Christ? Men had observed long before its coming that children are invariably born of two human parents. The wonder and significance of the Virgin Birth was for the ancients in part just a recognition by them of its exceptional character. The scientific spirit was not required to make men observe

such plain facts. What science has bred in men is a consciousness of the overwhelming regularity with which sequences occur in the world of material things and living things. And, as a result, all those who are under the control of this spirit are initially skeptical of the occurrence of any event in which the expected universal sequence does not occur. They are initially skeptical of the birth of a child without two human parents.

But the influence of the scientific spirit in creating doubt on this subject has not been confined to this skepticism in regard to an irregular birth. It has altered the attitude of men's minds towards the book in which the only narratives of the Virgin Birth are found. That book, it says, must be examined, as other books of history are examined, to weigh its sources of information, its accuracy, its consistency. And when so weighed, although it proves itself a book wonderful above all others, yet it is found to be a fallible book, written by real men in the light of quite human experience and quite human limitations. Beyond this, the new spirit at work in the world has raised doubts as to the truthfulness to fact of the setting in which these narratives of the Virgin Birth are found. Is a world in which angels appear to men and women with messages from God the same world we live in and believe in? Is a world in which stars move across the heavens guiding wise men to their goal, our world?

As a result of these new habits of thought and these new questionings, those who possess this new spirit deny or doubt the Virgin Birth of Christ. If they are outside the Church and little concerned with the interests of religion, they deny, often much too carelessly. If they are within the Church, teachers, ministers, lay people, deeply concerned for the truth of God as found in Christ and for the life of the Christian Church, they wonder and doubt, but hesitate to deny.

It is frequently said in this connection that those who approach the historical evidence for the Virgin Birth

under the influence of the scientific spirit are so predisposed against all miracle, that is, against all exceptional action of God in His world, that no reasonable body of evidence could convince them. On that point there is only space to say this:—Those who believe in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ look upon the world as His world. Any knowledge which they acquire as to the workings of the world is knowledge as to the workings of *His* world and ultimately knowledge of *His* workings. Religious people do not question whether God can work His will in this world or not, or whether God has acted in His world or not. Rather, the question with them is what God's way of working is. The Christian, taught of Christ, sees in the growth of flowers and in the falling of rain on just and unjust the work of God. The question for him is whether among the mighty works of God there occurred the Virgin Birth of Christ. And the Christian who has been led by doubt to an investigation of this long-established belief of Christians can only go on with his inquiry along the two lines already suggested. Is the historical evidence sufficient to convince an open and reverent mind? Is it such evidence as would convince men of other events equally exceptional and distant? Or, if it is not, is it in such close accord with other more established elements in our Christian faith and experience, that that fact coupled with such evidence as we have is sufficient to create belief in a truly Christian mind?

On this last point there is a large body of Christian opinion, past and present, which demands consideration. The substance of this opinion is that between a Christian thought of Christ, or a Christian appreciation of Christ, on the one hand, and His birth of a virgin, on the other, there is so close a connection that whoever believes in one will almost inevitably believe in the other also. It should be remembered that during the greater part of Christian history the question has been approached in

just the reverse order. For centuries the Virgin Birth was accepted at the start as an unquestioned historical fact, and with that as a fixed belief men then moved on to ask what the relations might be between this established fact and other Christian beliefs. That situation for many now has been turned right around. The historical evidence appears to them to be in itself inconclusive and to call the Virgin Birth in question, and their problem is whether it can gain the necessary support from essential connections with other facts or convictions to win their acceptance.

What then are the reputed connections that have been or may be found between a Christian thought of Christ and the Virgin Birth? Probably the most frequently expressed is the assertion that as the Incarnate Son of God, Christ must have been born of a virgin, or that the doctrine of the Incarnation involves belief as a corollary in the Virgin Birth. Various degrees of necessity are attributed to this inter-relation. Some hold it to be so close that Christ could not possibly have been what He was unless He was miraculously born. Others hold that while He might have come to us in some other manner, this method is so in accord with the facts of His nature that a belief in Him must almost inevitably lead to a belief in the miraculous birth. Still others hold that while the connection is in no sense necessary or inevitable, it was very fitting, or congruous with His nature and with other events in His life, that He should enter the world in this manner.[3]

[3] The following are typical of the varying positions on this point: "The physical method of the Incarnation—the Virgin Birth—also seems fitting. . . . This fitness lies in its being a proper sign of the coming of God into human life and experience." F. J. Hall, *The Incarnation,* p. 80. "And so, while we dare not say that God could not have become man by being born of two human parents, we can insist that His birth of a virgin fully agrees with the rest of His plan for the salvation of men." C. B. Moss, Anglo-Catholic

The proper starting point for an examination of these connections between belief in Christ and belief in His Virgin Birth is the New Testament, and first of all those narratives in the first and third Gospels in which the only accounts of His birth are found. In those chapters we read that Mary, who was betrothed to Joseph, before their marriage was consummated, conceived a child which she knew from the message of an angel to have been "conceived by the Holy Spirit." What did these marvellous circumstances mean or imply to the writers who recorded them? It is plain that they did not mean certain things which are frequently read back into them in the light of later Christian thought. They did not mean that Christ was thereby released from the sin transmitted in organic inheritance or resulting from the inherent sinfulness of the sex relation. It is safe to deny that the writers had any such ideas in their minds. Nor did they mean that Christ's birth was in this way shown to be the birth of a preexistent divine being. On the contrary, the plain meaning which they seek to express is that with the coming to Mary of the Holy Spirit this wonderful person,

---

Congress Books, No. 5, *The Virgin Birth.* "Undoubtedly individuals may abandon belief in the Virgin Birth and yet retain faith in our Lord's divinity, but it is very questionable whether large bodies of people or the Church as a whole could do so." E. J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles,* p. 105. "We should not today make belief in it our first line of defense, or maintain that a man who does not accept it cannot believe in the essential Divinity of Christ." V. F. Storr, *The Person of Jesus Christ, in Liberal Evangelicalism.* "To say that the historical fact of the Virgin Birth is a cardinal doctrine of the faith is to use language which no Synod of Bishops, so far as I am aware, has ever ventured to use. It is to confuse the Incarnation with the special mode of the Incarnation in a way for which Christian Theology offers no precedent." J. Armitage Robinson, *Open Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury,* 1913. "For my own part, I should not think of regarding explicit belief in the Virgin Birth of our Lord as *essential* to Christian faith." H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ,* p. 527.

Christ, first began to be.[4] What they did mean to say was that in giving to the world the long-hoped-for Messiah, the great Deliverer and Redeemer, God sent His creative Spirit, the power by which He had shaped the primitive chaos of the world into order, the power by which He had breathed life into man, the power by which He had lifted the prophets to great heights of vision, and by the direct action of His Spirit formed this child of promise in the womb of Mary, the Virgin. This child Jesus was, therefore, a true child of the Spirit of God, fashioned anew of God to do God's redeeming work, with unique directness a Son of God.

We have already recalled the fact that in the recorded teaching of Christ there is no reference by Him to His birth, so that if He knew of it, as He presumably would, He made no use of it in claiming and instructing His disciples. Likewise it is not mentioned in the Gospel of St. Mark, which is agreed by all to be the earliest gospel. And such hints as we have in the Acts of the Apostles as to the earliest preaching of Christianity contain no references to it. In the light of these facts conservative scholars now admit that the Virgin Birth was not a part of the earliest preaching of the Gospel.[5] This

[4] For that reason the word Incarnation, set forth so often in Anglican theology as the key word of Christianity, is inappropriate, or at least misleading, to describe the thought of these writers of Christian gospels. For Incarnation suggests the taking on of a human body or human nature by a preexistent divine life or person.

[5] Bishop Gore may be taken as a representative of conservative Anglican scholarship on this point: "Consequently, nothing concerning His birth—except His descent from David, which was apparently undisputed, and that He belonged to the family of Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth, who apparently died before the public ministry began, and of Mary, who certainly survived into the early days of the Church—entered into the first preaching of the gospel or the first knowledge of the Church. Certainly nothing concerning the birth of Christ was part of that assurance on the basis of which faith in Jesus was claimed. I may add that it ought not to this day to form part of the basis of the claim." Charles Gore, *Belief in God*, p. 274.

does not absolutely prove that it was not known or believed by the earliest witnesses to Christ. But it does suggest that if it was known by them or believed by them it was not considered a fact of the first importance in bearing witness to Christ.

In the letters of St. Paul and in the Gospel according to St. John we look in vain for evidence as to the interpretation placed on the Virgin Birth by the Christians of New Testament times because there is no mention of the Virgin Birth in either. What we do find in both of these writers is a view of the nature of Christ which represents a considerable change from that of the first three Gospels or from the thought of Christ Himself as recorded in those earlier Gospels. According to this view, in Him there came to men a preexistent being from the divine realm, in the language of St. Paul, one "who, being in the form of God, . . . took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:" in the language of the fourth Gospel, "the Word" who was "with God" and "was God" and "was made flesh, and dwelt among us." How these writers would have related their view of Christ's nature to the Virgin Birth we shall never know. Their interpretation, however, of Christ's nature is certainly incompatible with that represented by the Nativity stories in St. Matthew and St. Luke, in that the latter think of Him as beginning to be when the Holy Spirit came to Mary and thus non-existent before, while St. Paul and the writer of the Fourth Gospel think of Him as one who existed before creation with God.

Many scholars believe that these two great New Testament writers would have found it difficult to connect their interpretation of Christ with the narratives of His Virgin Birth. However that may be, it is certain that the belief in Christ as the Incarnation of a divine being became the established thought of the Christian Church and equally certain that during the second century the Virgin Birth came to be universally accepted. After we leave

the New Testament, therefore, the question as to the doctrinal significance of the Virgin Birth is entirely a question of its significance in relation to the Incarnation, of its necessity or importance or meaning for the entrance into human life of the Son of God or the Word of God.

It is not possible within the limits of a short chapter to trace in historical order all the views on this subject developed by Christian thinkers. During the second and third centuries the Church's teaching regarding Christ was most under attack from a strong party who were sure that there was a great gulf fixed between the divine, on the one hand, and the mortal and earthly stuff of humanity, on the other. They repudiated the thought that in Christ a divine being truly entered into the flesh and blood existence of humanity, and interpreted the bodily life of Christ as a phantom life. In defending her faith that in Christ, God and man, the divine nature and the human nature were truly joined and man thus redeemed, and in upholding the full historical reality of Christ's coming, the Church stressed the true bodily character of His birth, suffering and death. It is quite possible that the inclusion of the reference to the Virgin Birth in the Old Roman Symbol, the second century creed from which our Apostles' Creed grew, was a result in part of the Church's emphasis on the reality of Christ's human physical life.[6] In any case, there is no evidence that its inclusion had any other special significance. The Church of the second century unquestionably believed that Christ was conceived without the participation of a human father, but the point probably emphasized by the creed of the second century was the reality of His possession of a truly human body at His birth. If they read a special meaning or necessity, between the lines, in His being born of a

[6] A simple and clear statement of the two main theories as to the influences controlling the development of the Apostles' Creed may be found in Edward S. Drown's *Apostles' Creed Today*, pp. 37*ff*.

Virgin we do not know what that meaning or necessity was.

In the fourth century we find the Church faced with another issue, and contending with those who insisted that the divine being incarnate in the historical Christ was not truly or fully divine or was only a subordinate divinity. In the face of this opposition the famous Council of Nicaea asserted that Christ was of the "same substance" as God the Father, a position which has remained basic in orthodox interpretations of Christ ever since. It is an interesting fact that the official creed of that council (not our so-called Nicene Creed) did not contain any clause concerning the Virgin Birth. This does not mean that the bishops gathered at that council did not believe in the Virgin Birth. They certainly did believe in it. But it does suggest that they did not at that time consider it a mainstay of that doctrine of the Incarnation which they were most eager to assert in the strongest and most unanswerable form. It is not clear what motives led to the subsequent inclusion of the clause regarding the Virgin Birth in the creed which took the place of the creed of the Council of Nicaea, inherited its prestige and came to be called the Nicene Creed.[7] All we can say with confidence, therefore, is that the Virgin Birth is included in our two creeds because the Christians who framed them accepted the Gospel story of Christ's miraculous birth without question, and perhaps because they desired to stress the reality of His birth of a human mother. They must have seen in this marvel as in other marvels the evidence of divine presence and divine action.

[7] C. H. Turner, in his *Use of Creeds and Anathemas in the Early Church*, p. 52, refers to an assertion made in the course of the debate at the Council of Chalcedon, 451, to the effect that the clause regarding the Virgin Birth was introduced into the Eastern creed to offset the views of Apollinaris. But since Apollinaris accepted the Virgin Birth and erred on the side of granting to Christ only a partial humanity, it is difficult to interpret the meaning of the reference.

Beyond this, they do not suggest any theory as to why Christ must have been born of a virgin in order to be what they believed Him to be.

Up to this point we have discovered no view connecting Christ's birth of a virgin with His nature in a way that could be called essential except that contained in the Nativity stories themselves, the view, namely, that as the Messiah He was a new creation of God's own Spirit. We have already noted the fact that this interpretation of Christ's nature in the measure that it implied that the whole being of Christ began with the action of the Holy Spirit was abandoned by the Church at an early date.

In the course of subsequent Christian thinking, two theories have been developed which find an essential bond of connection between the Virgin Birth and a Christian view of Christ. The first is the view that the Virgin Birth was essential to His sinlessness; the second, the view that it was essential to a true incarnation. These have been and remain the two main grounds on which great doctrinal importance has been attached to the Virgin Birth and as such they deserve serious consideration.

The belief that the sinlessness of Christ demanded a Virgin Birth is based on the conviction that sin is a part of man's bodily inheritance and that Christ must, therefore, have inherited sin had He been born in the common human manner. This doctrine of inherited sin, or as it has been called in traditional terms, "original sin," was developed most fully by Augustine at the beginning of the fifth century, and from then on until modern times was an established part of orthodox Church teaching. According to this view, Adam, the first man, transmitted his sin to all his posterity, and not only was the corruption of human nature which his sin involved handed down as a part of the physical inheritance of the race, but all men are guilty of Adam's guilt, since all were in Adam when he sinned. In particular Augustine held that the sex

desire is the very heart of sin and the medium by which sin is transmitted from parents to their children. It can readily be seen that these ideas would quickly make connections with the established belief in the Virgin Birth of Christ, though they certainly had nothing to do with its origin. The argument runs as follows:—Christ was sinless in his human nature; but that could not have been so had He been in full physical descent from Adam: therefore He was miraculously born of a virgin. His was an utterly pure humanity. Therefore it could not have come from the love of a husband and wife for one another. Therefore He was born of a virgin. The mental environment in which these ideas flourished is shown by the fact that from the third century on through the mediæval period it was widely believed that the Virgin Mary remained a virgin in giving birth to Christ and ever afterwards, in other words, that her marriage with Joseph was not a physical union.[8]

This doctrine that Christ's sinlessness is accounted for by His Virgin Birth creates almost as many problems as it solves, even on its own assumption that Adam's sin is transmitted in the bodily inheritance. If a physical taint of sin is thus transmitted, why is there not the danger of such a taint being transmitted by Mary alone? As is commonly known, this logic worked itself out in the thought of the Roman Catholic Church. The doctrine, generally accepted in the West during the mediæval

[8] The following is representative of Roman Catholic teaching on this subject: "The most essential feature in the supernatural birth is that Christ was brought forth *utero clauso vel obsignato*, the womb remaining closed or sealed like the sepulchre from which He rose after death." Wilhelm and Scannell, *A Manual of Catholic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 106. Anglo-Catholic teachers, while sympathetic with the tendency of thought in this direction, do not consider it an article of faith: "Closely associated in Christian imagination with our Lord's Virgin Birth, although not to be regarded as being an article of the faith, is the ancient and very widespread opinion that the Blessed Virgin bore no children after giving birth to Jesus Christ—her perpetual virginity." F. J. Hall, *The Incarnation*, p. 94.

period, that Mary was herself conceived without taint of sin (immaculate conception) was in the middle of the last century declared to be an official doctrine of that Church.[9]

In order to escape this logic it is sometimes urged that what insured Christ's freedom from the physical taint of sin was not the fact that He was born without a human father, but the fact that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. This raises the question, if the Holy Spirit was able to cleanse Christ from the sin He would otherwise have inherited from His mother or to cleanse His mother from the taint she would otherwise have inherited from her two parents, why could not the Holy Spirit have created a sinless Christ born of two human parents?

Conservative teachers who have been touched at all by the spirit of the modern world are not likely to enter into such subtleties as these. In its more modern expressions the argument from sinlessness to Virgin Birth is not so specific and precise but more general. It is said that somehow man's sin must have affected his physical stock,[10] that the moral miracle of a sinless character demands a physical miracle to accompany it, that just as you cannot

[9] The less confident position of "catholic" opinion within the Episcopal Church on this point is well represented by the following: "Governed by a deep spiritual instinct, the Church has ever abhorred the thought that the Holy One should have been born of a sinful mother. It has therefore been held with Catholic consent that somehow, and before the conception of her divine Son took place, she was, by virtue of His merits, anticipatively applied, purified from sin. This is not susceptible of formal proof, but is a matter of spiritual perception of the fitness of things—a perception so general as to have all the practical value of demonstration." F. J. Hall, *The Incarnation,* p. 97.

[10] Bishop Gore finds this consideration the most weighty in establishing the congruity of the Virgin Birth with the nature of Christ: "I must confess that I cannot imagine how the birth of a really sinless man could have occurred without some physical miracle, so sure do I feel that sin has somehow affected the physical stock." *Belief in God,* p. 201. Cf. also his *Dissertations,* p. 66, and his *Belief in Christ,* p. 279.

put a human mind into a simian brain, so you cannot put a sinless character into a sinful body. But the difficulties are not escaped by making its foundations less dogmatic, by omitting reference to the great myth of Adam's fall on which the older theology was built up, or by dropping into the background that unclean thought of marriage, which the modern world with all its uncleanness would not tolerate. The more men stress the necessity of the Virgin Birth for the perfection of Christ's character, the more unreal do they make His moral life and the more do they isolate Him from the moral situation of mankind. It could hardly be said of one whose whole moral background and foundation was so radically different from ours that He "was tempted like as we are." His place as Example would be made meaningless. If He could not be what He was without breaking with the physical inheritance of man, how can He bring us into His likeness without our being physically detached from our ancestors?

The root of our modern distrust of this line of support for the Virgin Birth of Christ is our distrust of its basic assumption that by reason of sinful inheritance human nature is a mass of corruption from birth. The inheritance of individual guilt is a contradiction in terms. The organic inheritance of character is a notion to which it is difficult to attach intelligible meaning. Our ignorance of the connection between the elements of character and our bodies is profound. This does not mean that there is no truth whatever in the idea of inherited sin. It is true that the inherited burdens of mankind are made heavier by our countless failures of character. It is true that as we take our places in human society we find ourselves taken up into its evil and becoming party to its guilt. But these burdens are not such as we could fully escape without a suicidal flight from the whole life of men. Christ could not have escaped them all by the fact of being without human father. If He entered truly

into the experience of growing childhood, His mind and will being shaped as children's so commonly seem to be, by the society around Him, He was in contact with forces that transmit sin from generation to generation much more certainly than does physical inheritance.

Apart from all these considerations about which our human ignorance is so great as applied either to ourselves or to Him, it is difficult for those who have caught a fresh and simple hold of His teaching and life to see in little children corrupt inheritors of a vast physical taint, creatures "conceived and born in sin." The clean "naturalness" of this Master of life is one of the most astonishing marks that separate Him from most of the world's religious guides. He looks on birds and flowers and human affections and eating and drinking and, like God, pronounces them "very good," only evil when they are put before the kingdom of God. He looks on little children, unbaptized little children, and sees in them the likeness of the kingdom of God. His own teaching gives little support to those who find His birth of a virgin to have been essential to protect Him from the awful corruption to which His little half-brothers are heirs.

The second main position which finds a necessary or very important bond of connection between Christ's nature and His birth of a virgin is that which discovers the miraculous birth to be essential to a real Incarnation. This position can only be understood by asking which idea of Incarnation is meant. We cannot trace here the historical development through which Christian thought on this issue moved. Suffice it to say that the Church finally wrought out a definition of Christ as being one person with two natures, a human nature and a divine nature. It was even asserted that He had two wills. But when the question arose as to whether the one person in Christ was divine or human the answer which the Church gave was that the person was divine and the human nature

impersonal.[11] And that has remained the ruling tendency in strictly orthodox Catholic thinking regarding the person of Christ ever since. This is the view of Incarnation which is held to demand a Virgin Birth. The argument is that the child of two human parents is invariably *a* man, a human individual, a human person. But Christ was not *a* man, a human individual, a human person. Therefore He could not have been born of two human parents. He was a divine person existing from all eternity in the realm of God. Therefore He needed no human father. His conception or birth did not mark the origin of His personality, but only His entrance into the conditions of human life. Therefore He must have been born of a virgin.[12]

Here, as in the case of the argument from sinlessness,

[11] For the benefit of any who may doubt the existence of this theological opinion, the following references are given: "It (our Lord's Manhood, ed.) never had a personal ego other than that of the Eternal Son of God." F. J. Hall, *The Incarnation,* p. 134. "The truth that our Lord is only one Person, and that His one Person is divine, implies that His human nature has no independent center of personality." Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Christian Dogma,* p. 76.

[12] The following are instances of this argument: "He was no mere natural offspring of Joseph and Mary. Why not? Because the product of every such natural union is an individual human person." Wm. P. DuBose, *The Gospel in the Gospels,* p. 212. "Again, if Jesus Christ was the natural offspring of Mary and Joseph, it is hard to see how we can regard Him as other than an individual human person. In accordance with ordinary laws of nature, the product of such union is in each case a single finite human personality." E. J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles,* p. 104. A well-established law of nature, invariable in our experience, leads us to expect that the child of two human parents, begotten in the ordinary way, will be purely human." C. Harris, *Creeds or No Creeds?* p. 291. "Do not we inevitably associate with the ordinary process of generation the production of a new personality? Must not the denial of the Virgin Birth involve the position that Jesus was simply a new human person in whatever specially intimate relations with God? This seems to the present writer to be very probably the case, but at the same time to be a question very difficult to argue." Charles Gore, *Dissertations,* p. 64.

the case is not utterly simple, even granting its assumption that Christ was not *a* human person. We do know that the child of two human parents is a human individual. We do not know what the child of one human parent would be unless we accept in advance what we are now questioning. If the child of one human parent is possessed of a true human body, a true human soul, a true human will, all of which the Catholic Church emphatically asserted, why not also of a true human personality? It is difficult to discuss the matter with fitting solemnity. The whole notion of an impersonal human nature and especially of an impersonal will corresponds to nothing whatever in our experience, and can only be described as an inconceivable fiction.

It is frequently said that those who fail to see essential connections between the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth, or who have doubts concerning the Virgin Birth, either do not believe in the Incarnation or do not understand what Incarnation means. Probably it is true that most of those who have been led by the scientific spirit and the historical study of the New Testament to doubt the Virgin Birth do not believe in the Incarnation defined as the entrance of a preexistent divine personality into an impersonal human nature. If Incarnation means that Christ was not a true individual man, with a human soul, a human will, a human self-consciousness, it cannot hold a permanent place in a Christian faith that knows its own historical foundations and its own religious demands.[13]

[13] This position is increasingly taken by very moderate writers on the person of Christ: "There can be no question whatever that the impression which we receive, when we read the Gospel story, is that we are reading about an individual person like ourselves, possessed of a single volitional center and a single consciousness, a true human being who lived a genuine human life." V. F. Storr in *Liberal Evangelicalism,* p. 104. "We can adopt no theory of His Person which obscures His essential humanity. The doctrine that His humanity was impersonal, which early obtained currency in the Church, and is still today defended in some quarters, seems to me to obscure it." *Ibid.,* p. 107. "As our initial datum, we may

If any precious good has come out of the critical study of the New Testament, to compensate for all the searchings of heart it has brought, it is the rediscovery of the historical Christ in His full divine humanity.

The argument, then, which finds the Virgin Birth to be essential to the Incarnation because normal birth would have given a true individual man does not persuade those who find in Christ a human person. On the contrary, in the measure that they are persuaded that a true man could not have been born of a virgin, they find it more difficult to believe in the Virgin Birth of Christ.

We have now reviewed the main connections which Christian thinking has found between belief in the Virgin Birth and belief in Christ. There is the view implied in the Gospel stories of His birth, that He was a new creation of God's own Spirit, a new gift of God to men. There is the view that the Virgin Birth was essential for a sinless character, based on the assumption that sin is a part of man's physical inheritance. There is the view that the Virgin Birth was the necessary means by which a divine person could become incarnate in human nature, working with the assumption that Christ was not *a* man. The reader must judge whether these connections are sufficient to produce or compel belief in a mind that finds the historical evidence for the Virgin Birth inconclusive in itself.

All Christians will agree that the issue at stake in these discussions is what Christ means to Christians. The deep

---

select the truth that Jesus, as man, was possessed of personal individuality. He was not only Man, He was *a* man. It is not too much to say that no reader of the four evangelists could conceivably arrive at any other impression than that the central Figure was veritably a man—not merely a man, indeed, but a Jew of the first century—unless a contrary view had been put into his mind from outside. Nevertheless, as we know, traditional orthodoxy came to a different finding." H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*, p. 385.

distress produced by the questioning of the Virgin Birth is based on the conviction or feeling that it is a denial of the Christian view of Christ. We may not find it easy to reach agreement as to what is the truly Christian view of Christ. But it is fair to ask those who fail to find the historical evidence for the Virgin Birth sufficient to support confident affirmation of it and who deny an essential connection between belief in it and belief in Christ, to say what their view of Christ is.

The writer can only speak for himself, but believes that the position he will try to present is shared substantially by many of those who question or deny the Virgin Birth.

The Christian religion is that religion which finds in Christ the perfect and saving revelation of God. It is the religion which finds in Christ the redeeming initiative of God, by faith in which, that is by trusting surrender to which, men are saved. It is the religion which finds in Christ and in the spiritual life issuing from Him, all that men seek in religion,—fullness of life, fellowship with God, release from sin and death, the reconciling of man with God and with his fellowmen. In the Gospels we see a true man, a true human will, conscious of being a brother spirit to mankind, growing, suffering, wondering, tempted, dependent on God for strength and guidance, finding the fulfillment of His own will in doing God's will. But we find more than that. We find a man conscious that in Him and through Him God is reaching out to His people; that the will at work within Him is the will of God; that the love searching for wounded and lost humanity in Him is the love of God; that by Him God's own rule is being established. He summons men to absolute loyalty to Himself, a loyalty sovereign over all earthly attachments. He calls for an absolute obedience, not as to the will of a human master, but as to the will of the Eternal God uttered and active in Himself. He offers men absolute forgiveness, the forgiveness of

God. He sees in His own mighty works the present working of God.

His Jewish disciples interpreted His unique work and position, as He Himself did, in terms of their own religious thought and expectation, in terms of the hoped-for Messiah. The circumstances of His life and work did not fit at all exactly any of the many variable forms in which men had thought of the Messiah. By literalists He might well have been charged with a dishonest freedom of interpretation in setting forth His own religious meaning in those terms. But they were the only terms open to Him or the first Christians, and not to use them would have been to refuse to speak to the religious consciousness of His time. The first Jewish Christians did not think of Him, He did not think of Himself, as the Incarnation of a preexistent divine Being. Even more certainly the earliest Christians did not think of Him merely as a good man or as the best man who ever lived. That would not have founded a new religion. What they did find in Him was the saving revelation and action of God among them —a revelation unique and final.

The Christian Church was the fellowship of those who, responding with faith and trust and loyal obedience to the Divine will and action in Christ, found new life and the presence among them of a Holy Spirit. This Church quickly spread among peoples who approached religion in quite different terms from the Jews; people who saw as the central need of man in religion the entrance into human life of the Divine life. And turning to this new way of salvation, they found in Christ and in the religious fellowship which He had created the satisfaction of their religious needs, the true entrance of Divine life into human life. The Greek Christians inevitably expressed what they found in Christ in the words and thought forms of their own time and race. As a result, the great classical formulations of Christ's religious meaning and place were expressed in those terms, in terms of Incarnation. Prob-

ably they are more adequate than any other terms, to express what Christ means to Christians,—the true presence of God among us, the Divine working in history, the union of man and God. But the Church can hardly afford to make any word, however precious, a universal shibboleth of Christianity. There may well be those who find themselves more at home in the thought of the early Jewish Christians.

The heart of what Christ has meant to Christians, the central core of meaning that has been translated into the language and thought of many ages and races, and must be *freely* translated into many more if Christ is to be "Lord of all," is that in Him we find the sovereign will of God truly summoning us, the sacrificial love of God truly seeking us and the mind of God for man perfectly revealed to us. The tragedy is that while the Church of Christ debates, with little of Christ's charity, obscure mysteries of His life and nature, Christians, all of us, are failing so miserably to witness to the real presence of God in Him by surrendering our wills absolutely to the plain demands of His will, by conforming our minds utterly to the plain implications of His mind, and permitting His love to kindle the love of God in our hearts.

Further discussion of the relation of the Virgin Birth to the Incarnation may be found in the following references: Edward S. Drown, *The Apostles' Creed Today,* and *The Creative Christ;* W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation,* especially pp. 298–311; E. J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles;* V. F. Storr, *The Person of Jesus Christ,* in the volume of essays, *Liberal Evangelicalism;* C. B. Moss, Anglo-Catholic Congress Books, No. 5, *The Virgin Birth;* Leonard Prestige, *The Virgin Birth of Our Lord;* James Orr, *The Virgin Birth of Christ.*

V

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

By

Samuel McComb

SYNOPSIS

INTRODUCTION: Belief in the Resurrection an essential part of the Christian religion. Great confusion in the minds of today in regard to this article of the Creed.

I. ECCLESIASTICAL DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.
   (*a*) As set forth in the Creeds, "Resurrection of the flesh."
   (*b*) Testimony of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Tertullian. This doctrine frankly materialistic. The body amid transforming changes remains substantially the same.
   (*c*) Origin of the Doctrine. A survival of Judaistic thought found in a late passage in the Book of Isaiah and in the Book of Daniel. It occupies a large place in the Apocalyptic literature, especially in the Book of Enoch, and the Apocalypse of Baruch.

II. THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING.
   (*a*) A spiritual doctrine taught by our Lord. Summary of His teaching.
   (*b*) And also by St. Paul. The physical body dissolved in death and permanently cast aside. The Spiritual Body. Argument from I Cor. xv.

III. THE RESURRECTION AND MODERN THOUGHT.
   The aim of the early Christian writers was good; but the method of realizing their aim was bad. Meaning of the term "resurrection" to the modern mind. Necessity of the truth implied in resurrection. Some scientific considerations in support of the Pauline doctrine. The article proclaims the victory over death.

V

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

"I BELIEVE in the resurrection of the body." Such profession of belief not only is asserted in all the creeds of Christendom but has been from the beginning deemed an essential element in the Christian religion. This religion distinguishes itself from many ancient modes of thought by teaching that man in the totality of his being, not merely that aspect of him which we call the soul, survives the stroke of death. Among the doctrines of the Church challenged by our new knowledge of the Bible, and our new psychological and philosophical ways of thinking, this doctrine of the resurrection of the body takes a prominent place. Indeed quite recently a clergyman[1] of the Church of England was accused before his bishop by a brother clergyman of openly teaching a view of the resurrection which contradicted Catholic doctrine "as set forth in the ancient Creeds and in Holy Scriptures." Episcopal wisdom averted the scandal of a heresy trial. It, however, left the matter in great confusion, owing in large measure to the failure to make clear what is meant by such terms as "body," "flesh," "resurrection." We continue to suffer from the ancient vice of theology, the ambidextrous use of terms and phrases, with its resultant insincerity, and failure to apprehend the real meaning vaguely glimpsed and therefore inadequately expressed by men living in an intellectual environment very different from ours. As an aid to the dissipation of the mental confusion and spiritual embarrassment which too often accompany the recital of an ancient formula, it is the

[1] Rev. H. D. A. Major, B.D., Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford.

aim of this paper to exhibit: (1) The ecclesiastical doctrine of the resurrection of the body as contained in the so-called Apostles' and Nicene Creeds and in the writings of Christian theologians of the early centuries; (2) The teaching of the New Testament as modern scholarship reveals it. The written and unwritten tradition of the Anglican Church is that Holy Scripture "containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be found thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of Faith." And this is also the belief of all the Reformed Churches. The Creeds are to be interpreted by the Bible, not the Bible by the Creeds. (3) The meaning of the doctrine in the light of our ruling ideas as to the nature of body and mind. Here we must try to answer the question, In the light of what we know about the nature of the body and of its relation to mind, what do we mean to express by the phrase, "I believe in the resurrection of the body"?

I. The Ecclesiastical Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body[2]

The most important and the earliest of our Creeds is that which is commonly called the Apostles', dating from some time within the first half of the second century. Marcellus of Ancyra, writing to Julius I, bishop of Rome, in order to establish his orthodoxy in the eyes of that prelate, quotes a form of the Creed which is the earliest known text of the document. It is given in Greek, which was spoken in the world's metropolis during the first two centuries. In this ancient ancestor of our present Apostles' Creed we have the words: [I believe in] the *resurrection of the flesh.* The probable motive for this materialistic idea is to be found in an effort to refute the

[2] The authorities used are: Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom* (1881), Kattenbusch's *Das apostolische Symbol* (1894–1900), Burn's *Introduction to the Creeds.*

docetic assertion that our Lord's humanity was a phantasmal appearance, not real flesh and blood. But in a reaction against an overstrained spiritualism, the compilers of the Creed fell into the opposite error of a degrading materialism. That the phrase was no accidental slip of language is proved by the fact that Tertullian, writing at the end of the second century, cites the Creed as containing the words "resurrection of the flesh" or "restitution of the flesh."

Irenaeus (180 A.D.) incorporates passages from the Creed in his work "Against Heresies." Christians profess belief in Christ's "appearing from Heaven . . . *to raise up all flesh of all mankind.*" All the local Western Creeds agree with the Apostles' Creed in asserting the resurrection of the flesh. In the Office for the Visitation of the Sick in the Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church the same wording is preserved to this day. On the other hand, in the Services for Morning and Evening Prayer the word "flesh" is changed to "body" in the Creed as given in them. This change was first made in "A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for Any Christian Man," also called the King's Book, published in 1543, and has been followed since in the Creed as recited in the ordinary services of the Church of England and in the Episcopal Church of this country.

Let us now turn to the Eastern Churches. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem in the middle of the fourth century, wrote a series of Catechetical Lectures for the instruction of candidates for baptism. From these lectures the Creed in use in the Church of Jerusalem in his time has been reconstructed, and it closes with these words: [We believe in] "the *resurrection of the flesh* and in life everlasting." In the Creed given in the *Apostolical Constitutions* dating from about the middle of the fourth century —used as a baptismal confession—we have these words: [I believe and am baptized] "into the resurrection of the flesh and into the remission of sins and into the Kingdom

of Heaven, and into the life of the world to come." Epiphanius, writing about 374 A.D., gives two Creeds with the article in the form: [We believe in] "the resurrection of the dead." The same formula occurs in the points of doctrine cited by Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, in a letter to Alexander, Bishop of Constantinople (326 A.D.), and in all later Eastern Creeds including the accepted form of the Nicene Creed as recited in our Churches. It ought, however, to be remarked that the original Nicene Creed does not contain the clause about the resurrection. The so-called Athanasian Creed affirms that "all men shall rise again with their bodies."

Such, then, in brief outline is the witness of the Creeds to this article of the Christian faith. In spite of differences in wording there was no real distinction of meaning for the vast mass of Christians in the early centuries. They looked for a flesh and blood resurrection. We may go further and in the light of the testimony about to be presented, we may say that apart from one brilliant exception, the famous Greek theologian, Origen, the early Christian writers held and advocated a frankly materialistic doctrine of the resurrection. The body which is to rise again is the body that was laid in the grave. Indeed there are few points on which there was such unanimity of opinion. As Dr. R. H. Charles has pointed out, beliefs about the future life are the last elements in religion to experience the transforming power of new ideas and new facts. Even in our own time, as our burial customs testify, the average churchgoer, so far as he has thought seriously about the matter, takes the phrase "I believe in the resurrection of the body" quite literally, and would say that whatever changes the body may experience in the resurrection, it will remain substantially the same. How else, he would argue, could we recognize each other in the world beyond?

Let us now turn to the patristic evidence. What did the early Christian leaders and teachers mean by "the

resurrection of the flesh" or "of the body" or "of the dead"? Space will not permit an extended exposition of their testimony. We shall select, therefore, three famous Christian advocates who lived in the period during which the Apostles' Creed was taking shape, and we shall enquire what these men meant by the phraseology of that symbol as to the fortunes of the soul after death. Their names are Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian.

(1) Justin Martyr (150 A.D.), born in Palestine, was converted to Christianity and settled in Rome as a teacher, continuing to wear the philosopher's gown after his conversion. His "Apologies" and "Dialogue with Trypho" are unquestionably authentic and are of great importance for the light which they throw on the beliefs current in Christian circles in the writer's time. He distinguishes between two resurrections. The first takes place at the beginning of Christ's millennial reign on earth; the second, at the close of that reign. In the first, Christians and good Jews are raised that they may enjoy the spiritual and physical blessings of the New Jerusalem, built on the ruins of the old;[3] in the second, all men are raised without exception in order that they may receive judgment whether of reward or of punishment.[4] The resurrection body is the same in both acts of the resurrection drama, that is to say, a body of flesh.[5] He argues that even the Greek philosophers teach that discarnate spirits are able to feel and suffer; how much more, then, must Christians believe the same truth, "since we expect to receive again *our own bodies,* though we be dead and cast into the earth, for we maintain that with God nothing is impossible."[6] But Justin knows that the body laid in the grave is dis-

[3] Dialogue, lxx, cxiii.

[4] Dial. lxxxi (at end).

[5] Dial. lxxx. The translators in the Ante-Nicene Fathers Series inaccurately and confusedly render a Greek phrase meaning "resurrection of the flesh" by "resurrection of the dead," probably to make it conform to Justin's usual phraseology.

[6] I Apol. xix.

solved and answers the objection which his pagan contemporaries made to his view of the resurrection as quite incredible by putting to them a question which he evidently thought was unanswerable: "If you yourselves were not such as you now are and born of such parents and one were to show you human seed and the picture of a man and were to say with confidence that from such a substance, such a being could be produced, would you believe before you saw the actual production?" Why, then, should they deem it impossible that God should be able to reconstitute the bodies of men after they have been reduced to dust and ashes? But while the risen body will thus be the resuscitated physical organism, it will in the case of believers be freed from all defects, made immortal and incorruptible and rendered incapable of suffering.[7] This last point is discussed in the fragments of a work formerly ascribed to Justin, but probably the work of a third century writer. It is a formal treatise "On the Resurrection" and is throughout baldly materialistic. To the objection that if the flesh rise, it must rise the same as it falls, if it die with one eye it must rise with one eye, if lame, lame, he does not answer in the spirit of St. Paul, "the body that dies is not that body that shall be." On the contrary, he maintains that Christ healed the body of its disorders "in order to induce the belief that in the resurrection the flesh shall rise entire."[8] It is true that the physical body raised from the grave will not discharge the same functions as now; there will be no marriage nor giving in marriage. Still the body itself as consisting of flesh and blood, bones and nerves will be re-created by the power of God and share in the judgment pronounced upon the soul. The last chapter of the treatise, which, as has been said, exists only in fragments, appears to sum up the writer's main argument. The writer's meaning is clear and unmistakable. "The resurrection," he says,

[7] Dial. lxix.

[8] *On the Resurrection,* iv.

"is a resurrection of *the flesh which died.* For the spirit dies not; the soul is in the body and without the soul it can not live. . . . For the body is the house of the soul and the soul the house of the spirit. These three, in all those who cherish a sincere hope and unquestioning faith in God, will be saved."[9] There was nothing new in the proclamation of the immortality of the soul. Had not Pythagoras and Plato said the same? Here is the new thing: that not only the soul but the body is immortal.

(2) Irenaeus, a native of Asia Minor, who became Bishop of Lyons in France and was the most learned theologian of his time, devotes a considerable portion of his work, *Against Heresies,* to the refutation of heretical ideas about the resurrection. He is especially concerned with the Gnostic denial of a material or physical resurrection. To the mind of Irenaeus this was tantamount to a denial of the resurrection. And he puts forth all the power of his dialectical ingenuity to parry the force of his opponents' arguments and to compel Scripture to support his contention that not only in form but in substance the future body will be identical with the present. Incidentally, he gives an elaborate misinterpretation of the teaching of St. Paul. Let us hear a specimen of his argumentation. "That the flesh is able to receive life is shown by its living. But it lives as much as God wishes it to live. . . . But when God is able to give it life, and the flesh is able to receive life, *what prevents it from sharing in immortality,* which is a blessed and unending life given by God?"[10] This argument which is repeated by most of the early theologians amounts to this: God is omnipotent, He is able to do all things, therefore, He will gather again and reanimate the scattered particles which at one time entered into the body. But Irenaeus failed to see (1) that the Divine omnipotence is limited

[9] *Ibid.,* x.
[10] *Against Heresies,* Bk. V, 3, 3.

by the Divine nature and the Divine nature can not violate the law of self-contradiction. In other words, God can not make one and the same particle form part of a hundred different organisms at one and the same moment. And (2) he did not notice that such a resurrection as he demanded would be quite incompatible with the nature of a purely spiritual environment. But we are not concerned, at this stage, to refute Irenaeus, only to hear what he has to say. Perhaps the most startling doctrine he propounds is that which asserts a profound connection between the reception of the Lord's Supper and the immortality of the flesh. "When the mixed chalice and the bread that is made receive the Word of God and the Eucharist becomes Christ's body, and when by these the substance of our flesh grows and consists, how can they deny that the flesh is capable of the gift of God, namely, eternal life, when it is fed with the body and blood of Christ and is His member?" And to put his meaning beyond all possibility of doubt, he goes on to define the "body" referred to as "our truly human organism which consists of flesh, nerves and bones and which is nourished by the cup which is His Blood and increased by the bread which is His Body." He argues that the flesh becomes immortal through its participation in the Eucharist. His latest editor is constrained to condemn such an idea as "extremely materialistic."[11]

It is interesting to notice that in another work of Irenaeus, "The Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching," which was lost since the fourth century but discovered in our own time in an Armenian version, there is an incidental reference to the same notion of a physical resurrection. "For this soul," he writes, "has a resurrection in them that believe, the body receiving the soul again and along with it, by the power of the Holy Spirit, being

[11] F. R. M. Hitchcock's translation of *Against Heresies,* Vol. II, p. 93 (note).

raised up and entering the Kingdom of God."[12] This great controversialist seeks to refute the Gnostic denial of a physical resurrection by proofs drawn from the Bible, from the current psychology and from theological reflection. His great thesis is that the earthly body will be resuscitated by divine power and made capable of immortality. It is, therefore, with astonishment that one reads in a book by a modern Anglican divine the assertion that "even the second century fathers who were compelled to lay polemical stress upon the resurrection of *the flesh* were careful to insist that the resurrection involves a miraculous transformation. Irenaeus, for example, says expressly: It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body. . . . For these animal bodies succumb to death; then rising through the Spirit's instrumentality they become spiritual bodies, so that by the Spirit they possess a spiritual life." This quotation is followed by the statement that "there is not a particle of evidence that the reality of the change to a spiritual body at the resurrection has ever been denied by orthodox Christians anywhere."[13] One or two observations may be permitted on this remarkable passage. A little reflection will show that Irenaeus misinterprets St. Paul, and the Anglican theologian misinterprets Irenaeus. In the seventh chapter of the fifth book of his work *Against Heresies* he discusses the Pauline doctrine of the resurrection of the body as set forth in the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians. He shows that he has thoroughly studied the Apostle's words. All the more significant is the fact that he ignores not only here but throughout his entire treatise these words which cut at the roots of his theory: "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be. . . . But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him."[14] Is it not

[12] Chap. xlii. See J. H. Robertson's translation in the *Translation of Christian Literature Series.*

[13] Charles Harris, *Creeds or No Creeds?* p. 275.

[14] I Cor. 15: 37.

obvious that he came to St. Paul with a conception already formed and if he found thoughts in the Apostle incompatible with this conception, well, so much the worse for the Apostle? When he uses the phrase "spiritual body," he interprets it to mean a body which will be permanently indwelt by the Spirit. But the flesh remains flesh for all that, only now the source of its life is no longer the *psyche* or soul (which made it a psychical or animal body) but the Divine Spirit. When his opponents quoted against him, "flesh and blood can not inherit the Kingdom of God," he replied: "You are mistaken. St. Paul does not mean 'flesh and blood' literally; he means actions done under the influence of the flesh which turns man to sin and deprives him of life. If ye shall live as if ye were mere flesh and blood, ye can not enter the Kingdom of God." Irenaeus' anti-modernist interpreter does not see that if Irenaeus really meant that the material body will be miraculously transformed so that it ceases to be material and becomes purely spiritual his argument against the Gnostic denial of the salvability of the flesh falls to the ground. The whole structure of his thought goes down, like a house of cards, if once the permanence of the flesh is brought in question. He acknowledges that the risen body will have new qualities, but he maintains that its "substance" will remain the same. Here at least the ancient theologian shows himself superior to certain moderns. He saw what they do not see: that unless there is an identity of substance it is absurd to talk of the resurrection of the body. The question must be put: *Does the transformation at the Resurrection leave the body in any sense material?* The body as we know it requires food and air to replenish the burned-up tissue. Will such a body vanish or will it remain? If it vanishes, why speak of a resurrection of the body? If it remains, how can it enter a purely spiritual world?

(3) Tertullian (150–220 A.D.) is our third witness to early Christian belief about the resurrection. He devotes

a whole treatise to the subject and employs his great rhetorical and argumentative powers in the refutation of the Gnostic contention of the inherent corruption and worthlessness of the body implying its inability to rise again or to share in the immortality of the soul. He takes his stand on the ability of God to re-create what He was able first to create. Not only so, but the Last Judgment demands that not the soul merely but the entire man must present himself to be acquitted or condemned. Man consists of the union of two natures; he must therefore appear in both.[15] As sins and virtues alike are possible only through the flesh, it is obvious that the flesh must be punished or rewarded.[16]

He recites once more the legend of the phœnix, "that bird famous for its singularity, marvellous from its posthumous life" which at the end of five hundred years expires in flame, only, however, to rise out of its ashes and enter on another cycle of life. And he asks: "Must men die once for all, while birds in Arabia are sure of a resurrection?"[17] The prophecies of Nature, the dignity of the flesh, the power and might of God, and the necessity of the final assize—all these demand the rising again of the physical body. Still further, he finds the doctrine written in almost every page of the Bible. The very word "Resurrection," which means "rising again," can refer only to the body, for it is the body and not the soul that falls in death.[18] He reads into St. Paul's words an affirmation of the resurrection of the flesh. He uses the allegorical method, though he denies the same privilege to his opponents (in this curiously anticipating some modern divines). When, for example, Isaiah says, "Ye shall eat the good of the land," he is really referring to the blessings which await the flesh when in the Kingdom

[15] *On the Resurrection of the Flesh,* xiv.
[16] *Ibid.,* xv.
[17] *Ibid.,* xiii.
[18] *Ibid.,* xviii.

of God it shall be renewed.[19] The Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones and the story of Jonah and the Whale are interpreted as prophecies of a physical resurrection at the Last Day. He then turns to the New Testament. Our Lord's saying, "Fear God who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell," teaches us that "the resurrection of the dead is a resurrection of the flesh; for unless it were raised again it would be impossible for the flesh to be 'killed in hell.' " And he goes on to explain what he means by "the body," not a body of a subtle and secret nature, "but the fabric of flesh . . . which is seen and handled, and sometimes, indeed, killed by men."[20] Here at all events Tertullian is a rank materialist, and he rejoices in the fact. He interprets Christ's answer to the Sadducees as meaning that there will be a resurrection of soul and flesh—misconceiving the entire argument. His treatise draws to a close with these words: "And so the flesh shall rise again, wholly in every man, in its own identity, in its absolute integrity."[21] Can language be more explicit or unambiguous? And yet Tertullian shrank from the full implications of his position. The risen body will be changed. It will receive a heavenly garment and be made incorruptible and fit for the Kingdom of God. But he denies that the flesh will undergo such a change as amounts to destruction. "Destroyed," he says, "it must be by the change unless it shall itself persistently remain throughout the altered condition which shall be exhibited in the resurrection."[22] And again he writes: "Changes, conversions and reformations will necessarily take place to bring about the resurrection but the substance of the flesh will still be preserved safe.[23] He also holds that the life in the world to come will be

[19] *The Resurrection of the Flesh,* xxvi.
[20] *Ibid.,* xxxv.
[21] *Ibid.,* lxiii.
[22] *Ibid.,* liv.
[23] *Ibid.,* lv.

like that of the angels yet the flesh will be substantially unchanged that humanity may be preserved unimpaired.[24]

We find then that Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Tertullian are in essential agreement; that they believed in the literal interpretation of the article in the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in the resurrection of the flesh" or "of the body." And the same thing may be said of Ignatius, the author of the Second Epistle of Clement, Athenagoras (who wrote a treatise entitled: "Concerning the Resurrection of the Dead," of an extremely materialistic cast), Tatian, Hippolytus, Minucius Felix and Lactantius. This last writer in his "Divine Institutes" teaches at once a spiritual and a materialistic doctrine of the resurrection but makes no attempt to reconcile them.

So far, then, we have gained a fairly clear idea of what the religious teachers and leaders of the Early Church believed on the subject of our discussion. What about the bulk of the laity? Happily an interesting and pathetic document which answers this question has been preserved in considerable fragments. It dates from the second century and is in form a letter from the Christians in Lyons and Vienne in France to their fellow-believers in Asia Minor,[25] informing them of the severe persecutions to which they had been exposed. Among other things the letter describes how the pagans burned the bodies of the martyrs and swept the ashes into the river Rhone, and this they did that, as they said, "they may have no hope of a resurrection." It is obvious that it was the emphasis which the Christians laid upon a physical resurrection that was responsible for the misunderstanding of their persecutors. The heathen themselves, of course, rejected the idea of a resurrection.

To the question: Whence did the early fathers obtain their view of a flesh and blood resurrection? the answer must be—from the teaching of later Judaism. The earli-

[24] *The Resurrection of the Flesh*, lxii.

[25] Eusebius, Eccles. Hist. V. 6.

est mention in the Old Testament, dating from the third century before Christ, is the lyric utterance of an unknown prophet who, as he beheld the depopulated state of his land, cried out: "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs and the earth shall cast forth the dead."[26] The world-empires are about to pass; Israel will be restored to a greater than her ancient glory under the Messiah-King; and the righteous dead will be awakened from the sleep of Sheol and reunited to their bodies will enjoy the Messianic feast. The Book of Daniel (165 B.C.) goes a step further. It speaks of a resurrection not of good Jews only, but of the wicked as well, who in their bodies receive judgment.[27] But it is in the apocalyptic literature extending from the last two centuries before Christ to about a hundred and fifty years after Christ, that we find a detailed development of the idea. The essence of apocalypticism was a philosophy of pessimism. The world was so bad that the only way to mend it was to end it. And in the ruins of the old dispensation, the new would be built by the hand of God Himself working through His agent the Messiah. The Book of Enoch was regarded by the early fathers as on a level with canonical Scriptures, and in its earliest portion we are told that the righteous Israelites will be resurrected physically and will experience material joys. In a later section of the work it is a purely spiritual resurrection that is taught.[28] The Apocalypse of Baruch, a composite book dating from various times in the first century of our era, asserts the bodily resurrection. "The earth will assuredly restore the dead . . . making no change in their form; but as it has received them so it gives them back, and as I have committed them to it, so it causes them to rise."[29] But after the dead have been

[26] Isaiah 26:19.
[27] 12:2.
[28] li. 1–5. Cf. 503. 3, 4.
[29] l. 2.

recognized by the living, the good will be made like unto the angels and equal to the stars, shining in a very splendor of glory.[30] The body will be changed, nevertheless it remains a body. This contradiction the writer makes no attempt to solve. The reader will observe distinct resemblances to the view of St. Paul, yet there is a fundamental divergence. Baruch wants to save the body in a transformed condition, the Apostle would exchange the body of our humiliation for the body of Christ's glory.

II. New Testament Teaching

Creeds and theological writings possess only a delegated authority. They are to be accepted only in so far as they are in agreement with the teaching of Holy Scripture, and this teaching can be discovered not by cursory and unintelligent reading, but by the most careful study with the aids which modern investigation has put at our disposal.

Our first question naturally is: What has Christ to say about the resurrection? On examining the Gospels we find that while belief in a glorious and immortal future for the human soul is the background of all His thinking, He gives only a hint at the nature of the resurrection life. It occurs in His argument with the Sadducees.[31] The question put by this worldly, political, and conservative party was based on an imaginary case. The old levirate law laid it down that a man should marry the widow of his deceased brother, should he have died childless. Seven brothers were married successively to the one woman. The Sadducees who denied the resurrection asked the question: "In the resurrection whose wife shall she be?" Our Lord refutes this materialistic idea. "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage," He replied. He then substitutes a spiritual for a grossly

[30] Isaiah 41:3.

[31] Mark 12: 18–27. Cf. Matthew 22: 23–33. Luke 20: 27–40.

sensuous conception of the future life. He rejects the Pharisaic tradition inherited from the dreams of Apocalyptic writers that the future mode of existence will be capable of physical and material relations. There is no sex in the other world, the realm of discarnate spirits. On the other hand, He asserts as against the Sadducees that the divine resources are not exhausted by the arrangements of the world that now is—God is able to call into existence new arrangements in another and higher realm. Personality persists in all the fullness of its powers. Life in the world beyond so far from being a thing less to be desired than our present existence, a joyless, meager, shadowy and utterly unsatisfying experience, transcends the present order and is radiant with unsuspected glory. Men and women shall be "as the angels in Heaven." In other words, resurrection is a fact, only it must be interpreted spiritually, not materialistically. Angels must be conceived of as possessing an organism appropriate to their spiritual environment. Our Lord intimates that such an organism will belong to risen humanity. He then leaves the question of the resurrection and speaks specifically of immortality. With something of an *argumentum ad hominem,* He asks His opponents to reflect on the meaning of a passage whose authority they did not doubt: "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." His own interpretation comes like a flash of light: "God is not the God of the dead but of the living." It is as though Christ said: "These old Scriptures tell us of a God who entered into a relation of friendship with men. This friendship was so intimate that God was called their God. Death can not put a term to his loving relationship. I know that this must be so, for I know the soul of man and I know God my Father." This deep glance into the nature of God and of man establishes the foundations of a truly spiritual conception of the life immortal.

We may briefly summarize Christ's teaching on the life beyond. (1) He asserts His conviction that there is a life after death. (2) This life is the destiny of those who have entered into loving relations with God. (3) It is spiritual, not material. Flesh and blood belong to the present order. At death they are cast aside and henceforth the risen dead are as the angels in Heaven. (4) The ancient patriarchs and, therefore, all who like them loved and served God, and have passed into the Invisible, now enjoy fullness of life in God. (5) The future life belongs to a higher plane than the present and implies conditions and experiences infinitely more satisfying than those of earth and time.

We now turn to the teaching of St. Paul as set forth in the classical passage in the fifteenth chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians. We must remember that, as a Pharisee, St. Paul believed in a material resurrection. It is, therefore, another proof of his spiritual genius that he freed himself gradually from his pre-Christian conceptions of the future life and brought to the birth a truly Christian doctrine shaped by his insight into the nature of the risen Saviour. As Dr. H. A. A. Kennedy remarks: "At no point in his conception of the Last Things has St. Paul produced so remarkable a transformation as in his doctrine of the Resurrection. Gaps remain at various points. The Apostle claims no completeness for his view. Some of the traditional conceptions lie side by side, as it were, in his mind with those which he has attained through the creative power of his Christ-possessed spirit."[82] Read the First Epistle to the Thessalonians and then turn to the Epistle to the Philippians, and you cannot fail to see what a long spiritual journey the Apostle has accomplished. At the end he breaks through the theological and psychological knots in which old traditional views had tied him, and his loving spirit gains its goal at one leap: "To me to live is Christ

[82] *St. Paul's Conception of the Last Things*, p. 227.

and to die is gain. . . . Having the desire to depart and to be with Christ; for it is very far better."[33]

In order to understand the Apostle's impassioned argument in his letter to the Christians at Corinth, we must recall the fact that these Christians did not, as is popularly supposed, deny the immortality of the soul. As a matter of fact, they were naturally influenced by Greek thought to assert the soul's persistence after death. What they denied was the resuscitation of the physical body,[34] for the only resurrection which they could conceive was physical resuscitation, and this they felt to be quite incredible. To meet their difficulty the Apostle puts forth his utmost powers of thought and language to show that *the physical body is the prey of death from which for it there is no resurrection.* Ancient and modern writers have racked their ingenuity to make the Apostle say something he did not say and mean something he did not mean. The truth is, St. Paul's thought is too spiritual, too mystical for the vast majority of Christians in all ages who are still enamored of the "beggarly elements of Judaism." Yet his words abide as a startling rebuke to man's ingrained materialism. "But some one will say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come? Thou foolish one, that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be but bare grain . . . but God giveth it a body even as it pleased Him, and to each seed a body of its own. . . . It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body; there is also a spiritual body. . . . Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."[35] Well had it been for the Church had she taken to heart these words of the great teacher. Confounding im-

[33] Phil. 1:21–23 (R.V.).

[34] They did not deny that Christ had risen; but He was an exception.

[35] I Cor. 15:35, 37, 44, 50.

mortality with physical resurrection and unable to believe the latter, thoughtful persons have too often concluded that the fall of the one belief carried with it the fall of the other. What the Apostle insists upon is that while the physical body will moulder in the grave, God will clothe the soul with a new body, a *spiritual* body. To many these words sound too subtle for comprehension. All the bodies we know are physical; how, then, can there be a spiritual body? But the Apostle reminds us there are different kinds of bodies suited to the various kinds of life, manifested by these bodies. All he wishes to express by the term "spiritual body" is that after death the soul will find a supersensuous vehicle of self-manifestation so constructed as to be adapted to a purely spiritual world and its laws. Our present physical frame subserves our present physical needs. When we die, the Apostle would have us understand, we slip out of this earthly tabernacle into another which will do for us all that we mean by the word "body." He is thinking in a transcendent world and we need not be surprised if his words should be difficult and paradoxical. Nevertheless, at bottom he grasps a great idea and one of permanent worth which belongs to the substance of the Christian faith. The Greek rejected the thought of the resurrection of the body because of his own intellectualism. The eternal element in man is his reason. God is the everlasting Thinker, and man as *mind* would share in the Divine life. But all else in man, emotion, desire, effort, all that goes to make the wealth of a truly human experience, being associated with the bodily life, perishes at death. In contrast to this meager, truncated existence, the Apostle held up before his contemporaries the glorious and enheartening hope that the life in the world to come will be freer than this life, that its joy will consist in the unimpeded energizing of man's emotions, love, and

sympathies, and not of his intellect alone. If he deprives them of a materialistic view which when thought out appears grotesque and repellent, it is that he may suggest a nobler and more satisfying idea and one which seems more worthy alike of God and of man.

It may be asked, How does the Apostle conceive of the relation between the body laid in the grave and the body assumed at death? His analogy from a corn of wheat must not be pressed unduly. Of necessity St. Paul could not know what modern knowledge about vegetable and animal life has taught us. We now know that when we sow a seed we put the living germ into the ground, that it is only the outer husk which perishes, that the germ develops in accordance with its nature. What happens is not the resuscitation of the corn of wheat below the ground but the emergence of the living element clothed with a new embodiment above the ground. So also is the resurrection of the dead. Resurrection does not mean the resuscitation or rehabilitation of the flesh and blood and bones. It means that man's spirit, vestured with a new and spiritual organism, passes from the material to the spiritual plane. The Apostle does not discuss the spiritual body, nor does he dogmatize as to how it is related to the physical body. He could only see in part and prophesy in part. It is true that theologians in ancient and modern times have sought to supplement the Apostle's theological deficiencies. Some have speculated about the existence of a germ in the physical body which defies the power of change and death, and that out of this germ the new resurrection body will be developed. Tertullian tells of bones discovered in his own time which belonged to men who had died five hundred years before, and he seems to think that the teeth will outlast the ravages of millennial eras and constitute the nucleus of the new resurrection body. It is enough to say with the Apostle that just as in the seed there is a living germ, so in the

body there is a living spirit which death sets free for a nobler existence.[36]

III. The Resurrection and Modern Thought

It is now time to raise the question: What do we mean or what ought we to mean today when we stand up and recite the words: "I believe in the resurrection of the body"? We have seen what the compilers of the creeds and early Christian writers would have us believe and we do not hesitate to reject their statements as quite irreconcilable with the teaching of the New Testament and with what we know of the order of the world. What they propound as a fact we are convinced is not a fact. There is no resurrection of the flesh. Yet the spiritual truth which ancient Christians tried to express in a crude fashion is as valid today as ever, and it is this truth with whatever else our newer spiritual insight supplies that ought to be symbolized by the words. What was this truth? I answer: *The survival after death of all that is essential to human personality.* These early men believed that in some sense the physical body was essential to man's complete being, and, therefore, they felt themselves constrained to attribute to it immortality. They were right in their intention; they were, as we now know, wrong in their method of realizing it. Thus sadly and miserably did the Church drift to and fro between a spiritual perception of the meaning of Christ's resurrection and of St. Paul's doctrine, and an outworn materialism that demanded flesh and bones. But one can see that some of them were haunted with the feeling that all did not go well with their reasoning. Those writers had, at the end, on their hands a body which was "spiritual" and "material"; that is to say, a contradiction in terms. And to this "lame and impotent conclusion" they came because of their inability to rise to the height of St. Paul's great

[36] It is only just to remark that some scholars do not accept the above interpretation of St. Paul's thought.

argument. The truth, for which they argued in however wrong a fashion, still stands, and it is a truth which more than ever needs to be proclaimed today.

It is worth observing that the phrase "resurrection of the body" or "of the flesh" occurs nowhere in the Bible. Jesus never speaks of the resurrection of the body; it is the person who is raised, not the body. It is also worth observing that except in one passage in the Fourth Gospel[37] which such an eminent authority as Dr. R. H. Charles rejects[38] as doubtful, we find nowhere the process of resurrection brought into connection with the tomb. The Greek word translated "resurrection" literally means "standing up." Up from where? Not from the grave but from Hades, the realm of spirits where, according to ancient belief, the dead were assembled. Resurrection, therefore, meant that the soul entered upon fullness of self-conscious life in a body. The best translation into modern phraseology of the term is the word *survival*. What are we to understand by the "body"? The compilers of the creeds and early Christian teachers could not know what we know about our bodies. They did not realize that the body is a temporary composition of borrowed particles which are constantly being replaced by fresh loans. One may say it is a stream of atoms which never ceases to flow from birth to death, or better, it is, as Lotze remarks, like a ripple round a stone hidden in a stream. At death the ripple vanishes, the stream has dried up. Hence we must not look for identity in the matter of the body; only in its form. And the form of our bodies is sustained for the time being by the particles that come and go and never continue in one stay. Had, therefore, the early writers reflected on their theory of a physical resurrection, they would have seen that if the scattered particles were collected again, and were in-

[37] 5: 28, 29.

[38] See also Pfleiderer and Wellhausen.

corporated in our bodies, we should rise again in such elephantine and grotesque proportions that the very angels might well gaze at us in deep perplexity not unmingled with dread. But if we must abandon the notion that our terrestrial bodies will rise again, must we fall back on the Greek idea of disembodied immortality? Now, as we have seen, St. Paul suggests—and his suggestion is in harmony with Christ's teaching—that at death another body will be supplied us analogous to our present condition, but suited to the new environment into which we enter. There are many questions which we would like to ask about this "spiritual body" which is to take the place of the earthly organism, but no answer is given us. Whence did St. Paul get the idea? Of what did he conceive the spiritual body to be made? Is there any continuity between it and the present physical body? If so, how are we to understand it? If we cannot solve all our difficulties, at least we can see that where the Apostle understood that the soul needs an embodiment in the other world even as it needs one here, he was in harmony with our latest scientific research. In a private letter to the writer, Sir Oliver Lodge (who kindly permits quotation) writes: "My working hypothesis (of the spiritual body) is that it is composed of Ether, not of ordinary matter. It seems to me the vehicle of the spirit hereafter, just as the material body is here and now. In fact I think we have the 'Ether' body now as well as the 'Matter'; only like Ether generally it makes no appeal to the senses. When we slough the matter-body, we go on with the 'ether-body.' And that is what I think St. Paul, in his inspired moments, was catching a glimpse of." Be this as it may, such speculations open up undreamed-of possibilities in man's spiritual development. The idea of John Foster, the essayist, that in the world to come human beings would be able to flash from world to world with inconceivable velocity may well have some foundation in fact. When we reflect on the profound

unity of mind and matter here and now we are constrained to think that we may have here an index to a permanent and structural principle of the universe. So that we may say that if the soul survives death, it will take to itself something which may be described as on the borderline of matter and spirit, not exactly matter as we know it through the senses, yet akin to matter and capable of being the alert and efficient instrument of the spirit. What if Swedenborg should be right when he says that we are building every day our future bodies which interpenetrate our present animal organisms and which register all the thoughts, noble and beautiful as well as sinful and base, that have entered into our vital experience? All we have been and all we have done does not pass away with the body given over to death. We carry it with us into the next world. (And this is part of what we mean when we say: "I believe in the resurrection of the body.")

But it may be asked: Why is a body of any kind necessary? Why not abandon all that is meant by or has been associated with the term "resurrection" and simply content ourselves with the immortality of the soul? So some theologians have suggested. But unembodied thought is inconceivable. Individuality is of the essence of real spiritual life. Formless life means impersonal life. How could one soul recognize another if neither had any form? How could a soul recognize itself or differentiate itself from all other souls if it existed without any distinctive features? Our deepest instinct echoes the poet's words:

> "Eternal form shall still divide
> The eternal Soul from all beside."

Moreover, the doctrine of a spiritual body preserves continuity. When we enter the other world we do not enter "naked," though curiously enough some mystics have yearned to do so, nor have we to search for the elements whereby to weave for ourselves a new body, but we enter with the body which we have made for ourselves here.

It is here that modern scientific research is coming to the assistance of religious belief.[39] Evidence is accumulating that under certain unknown conditions discarnate spirits are able to reveal themselves in recognizable form to persons who are sensitive to their presence. If in a room containing twenty persons, three or four of them discern a figure which the others cannot perceive, it is obvious that here we have an objective fact, yet not wholly objective in the ordinary sense. For over two thousand years literature has recorded supervisual visitations of apparitions of many of which no naturalistic explanation seems possible. But recent investigation by experts connected with the Psychical Research Society has put the whole subject on sound scientific foundations. While they differ as to the explanation of the facts, they have, I believe, put the reality of the phenomena beyond all reasonable dispute. Telekinesis, or the movement of objects without visible or sensible contact, is one of the commonplaces of the new science of "metapsychics." The experiments of Sir William Crookes, Alfred Russel Wallace, Charles Richet and von Schrenck-Notzing have proved that apparently intelligent but invisible agents can affect ordinary material objects. But perhaps the most startling phenomena are those known as materializations. Take the following as an illustration: "I have seen a luminous cloud visibly condense to the form of a hand and carry small objects about. Sometimes the hand appeared perfectly natural, the flesh apparently as human as that of any in the room. . . . I have retained one of these hands in my own, firmly resolved not to let it escape. There has been no struggle, but it gradually seemed to resolve itself into a vapor and so faded from my grasp." Surely these must be the words of a cracked-brained

[39] On the whole the two most comprehensive books on the evidence for psychic phenomena are: F. W. H. Myers, *Survival of Human Personality After Bodily Death* (1902), and C. Richet, *Thirty Years of Psychical Research* (1923, Eng. trans.).

spiritualist, not certainly of a wise and sober man. They are the words of Sir William Crookes, one of the greatest physicists of the age. And at the end of his long and honored career he reaffirmed all he had borne witness to. It would seem as if we were compelled to believe that the spiritual body has power to take to itself a material covering so that it can present itself in a form resembling the physical body which was the individual's possession when alive on this earth. A striking illustration of what would seem to be the power of a discarnate spirit to make itself visible to one sensitive to its presence, has been recently communicated to the writer. It is to be regretted that considerations of space forbid the telling of the whole story as the percipient set it down. Only the essentials can be given. On a certain day in 1922 the percipient returned home from his office in the evening to learn that his wife was seriously ill, apparently in a state of coma. "I stepped immediately to the bedside; her appearance startled me. I was then alone with my wife. I at once got my heating pad and attached it to the lighting outlet, and reached down to put it on my wife's feet. They were cold. I examined her more carefully and rising up with a cry, 'My God, she is dead!' I burst into tears. Almost instantly a calm came over me such as I had never experienced before. The objects about me seemed to fade from my sight like the dissolving views made by a stereopticon with a double lens, and in their place I saw distinctly with eyes that were not mortal, my wife standing by my side, and with ears which were not of the flesh I plainly heard her voice. . . . She appeared as she looked when she was twenty-five or thirty years of age. She was clad in a flowing robe, her hands clasped at full length in front of her. . . . The head was slightly bowed and her face wore a peaceful but sad expression. . . . At a short distance in front of her everything was of almost inky blackness. Behind her was a doorway without a door through which a light shone.

The light had a peculiar quality of softness; its color was slightly yellow and not dazzling, but soft as I have said. As we both stood thus, my wife's voice fell upon my ear, speaking slowly, distinctly, softly, but with great impressiveness: 'Do not mourn for me.' And then without seeing her leave the spot or move, the vision faded out, and the objects about the room reappeared, and I was standing by my wife's bedside, my head bowed just as I was at the instant when the vision to which I have referred appeared. . . . I may add I knew nothing of so-called spiritualistic phenomena. I have never been a believer in them nor had I rejected them. The only work I ever read on the subject was Camille Flammarion's 'The Unknown,' and that was years ago." The writer of the foregoing is a highly respected official of the United States Government.

What rational objection can be urged against the view that discarnate intelligences may have etheric bodies by which they can bring about objective phenomena? Immanuel Kant did not dismiss the matter with a wave of his hand. He says: "I confess I am very much inclined to assert the existence of immaterial beings in this world and to put my soul itself into that class. These immaterial beings form perhaps a great whole which may be called the immaterial world . . . and it will be found, I do not know when or where, that the human soul in this life is in indissoluble communion with all immaterial natures of the spirit-world, on which it acts and from which it receives impressions."

When we recite the words, "I believe in the resurrection of the body," we do not affirm that the flesh we commit to the grave will ever see the light of day again, but we do affirm that the spirit which thus casts aside "the muddy vesture of decay" will survive in the fullness of its powers, clad in a new garment, a suitable medium for self-expression and manifold activity. We proclaim the victory of life over death. And when the harsh and

repellent facts of physical experience, the external phenomena of death overshadow us with doubt and seem to reduce our loved dead to bodiless abstractions, we cry with the poet:

"Nay—but as when one layeth
His worn-out robes away
And taking new ones—sayeth
'These will I wear to-day,'
So putteth by the Spirit
Lightly its garb of flesh,
And passeth to inherit
A fairer garb afresh."[40]

There is a large literature on the subject. The titles of a few books which will be found useful for further study are appended.

C. T. Wood, *Death and the Beyond*, 1920.
R. G. Macintyre, *The Other Side of Death*, 1920.
B. H. Streeter and Others, *Immortality* (chap. III), 1917.
S. McComb, *The Future Life in the Light of Modern Inquiry* (chap. vi), 1920.
H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul's Conception of the Last Things*, 1904.
W. F. Cobb, *Mysticism and the Creed* (chaps. xxiv–xxv), 1914.
Sir Oliver Lodge, *Science and Immortality*, 1908.
E. Worcester, *The Living Word* (chap. xii), 1908.

[40] Author unknown: quoted by W. A. Momerie, *Immortality and Other Sermons*, p. 148.

VI

HONESTY AND THE CREEDS

By

Norman Burdett Nash

SYNOPSIS

I. Loyalty, the Primary Question.
   1. Creedal "belief" primarily not orthodoxy but discipleship.
   2. The churchman's loyalty.
   3. Why not change or split or abandon one's church?
   4. The lesson of 19th-century controversies.
   5. The liberal's duty to remain.
   6. Permissible limits of deviation.
      (*a*) The layman.
      (*b*) The clergyman.

II. Veracity.
   1. The problem is for *all* Anglicans.
   2. "Reserve" a false solution.
   3. Distinction between doubt and denial not helpful.
   4. Distinction between "facts" and "theories" not helpful.
   5. Test of "original meaning" rejected.
   6. Test of "common understanding."
   7. "Symbolic" interpretation.
   8. "Religious" interpretation.
   9. Creed as a "monument" of past doctrine.
   10. Test of "general doctrinal accord."

Conclusion: Continuity and Veracity.

VI

HONESTY AND THE CREEDS

"To deny, or to treat as immaterial, belief in the Creed in which at every regular service of the Church both Minister and people profess to believe, is to trifle with words and cannot but expose us to the suspicion and the danger of dishonesty and unreality. Honesty in the use of language—to say what we mean and to mean what we say—is not least important with regard to religious language (and especially in our approach to Almighty God), however imperfect to express divine realities we may recognize human words to be."

These words from the sixth section of the Dallas Pastoral Letter are among the weightiest in that document. That straightforwardness and sincerity are essentials of Christian character, and requisites of Christian worship, every Christian recognizes. Moreover, as most of us realize, the charge that dishonesty in this matter is common among us is quite explicitly believed and proclaimed not only by conservatives of our own and other churches, but by liberals in the Protestant churches, and by "the man in the street." A sentence in the statement by a number of Unitarian clergy is typical: "Let us make it plain that religious teachers who play with words in the most solemn relations of life, who make their creeds mean what they were not originally intended to mean, or mentally reject a formula of belief while outwardly repeating it, cannot expect to retain the allegiance of men who are accustomed to straight thinking and square dealing."[1]

Under fire thus from all sides, can the "liberal" member

[1] *Boston Herald,* Jan. 10, 1924.

of a church which retains two of the ancient creeds in her worship and makes one a test of membership, present any defense of his position, which to honest and intelligent men of such divergent views as those just referred to, clearly seems indefensible?

We must begin by making clear that the primary ethical problem involved here is not the question of verbal veracity (which seems at first so simple and under analysis becomes so extraordinarily complex), but the question of loyalty, in the light of which the question of veracity becomes possible of solution.

In summing up the arguments pro and con between Professor Henry Sidgwick and Canon Hastings Rashdall, which form the most important published discussion of this matter, Dr. Bernard Bosanquet writes: "The importance attached to documents [by the disputants] upsets the balance of the discussion. . . . I do not believe that the problem of remaining or not remaining a minister of a certain church ought to be represented primarily by the question of believing or not believing in some of the documents in which it (the church) requires belief to be professed. I do not think that this is the primary question even for the most critically-minded." That question is "whether reading together the various formularies and accepted expressions of the church's doctrine, and considering its history and present work and aims, its cause seems one desirable to promote, and one in promoting which the individual could find his best life work. In reviewing this question, any one would give weight to such a fact as that formularies, to him obsolete, have to be recited by him in the ritual with an expression of belief. But to any one who has been able to decide the main question in the affirmative, the question of veracity would be so greatly modified as to present little difficulty."[2]

[2] *International Journal of Ethics*, 1896–1897. Sidgwick's two articles were published in his *Practical Ethics* (1898), and reviewed by Bosanquet in the same Journal, 8:390*ff*.

For the creeds are the creations of the Church, but the Church is the creation of Christ. The clearest definition of the supreme qualification for membership in the Church, in the words of our Lord, is this: Whoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother (Mk. 4:35). The *primary* meaning of all the Christian creeds and confessions, no matter how far the churches which made them may have come in the course of time to depart from it by substituting orthodoxy for discipleship, is indeed, as the Bishops in Section 1 of the Pastoral have reminded us, a religious meaning; the creeds are a profession of loyalty to God in Christ and of a whole-hearted commitment of our lives to the will of God as revealed by our Lord. "I believe in God" means primarily: I commit myself and my life to Him, and not: I believe with my mind that He exists.

Intellectual self-stultification is not the chief sin of our time nor is intellectual sincerity, therefore, the principal thing lacking among us. The great offense of all the parties in all the churches who profess to follow Christ is that we follow Him at such a distance. And we who use the ancient creeds, as well as those Christians who have abandoned them, cause the unbeliever to blaspheme a thousand times more by our failures to live up to the name of disciple than by any esoteric interpretations of formularies. The vocabulary employed and the spirit shown in ecclesiastical controversy are themselves a notorious part of this, our most grievous fault.

The primary question, on which depends the real honesty of every member of every church, is this: Are you a sincere believer, that is, are you striving to follow Jesus Christ? And the words with which most of us will answer are "Lord, I believe. Help thou my unbelief." This incontestable principle, that primarily creeds must be taken as professions of personal loyalty, of ideals rather than ideas, allots to them their proper place in the life of our branch of the Church of Christ, whose doctrine,

discipline and worship are all designed to express and to cultivate Christian discipleship. If she is determined to keep her loyalty to her Lord in the foreground, the Church will be well advised to retire her special doctrines and tests to a subordinate position, for as Dean Hodges once said: "There is no need to be more orthodox than Christ." She will ask of her members not readiness to give a rigid adherence to a strict construction of a few clauses selected from her formularies round which controversy is then raging, but rather: Taking into consideration the historical tradition of this Church, her spirit of fellowship, the voice of her worship and the methods of her work, is she now, or do you believe she will prove to be, the mother of your faith, the school of your discipleship? As soon as liberals shall receive this second challenge when they knock for entrance at her doors, many of them will say: Of all churches, this is the one to which, in all humility and sincerity, I would give my loyalty and my service. And of that host of liberal churchmen[3] who have been her grateful children all their lives, surely almost all will agree with an English clergyman:

"I am at home in this Church. . . . I love it. The sacred influences of my life dawned within its fold. The memories of my childhood, of my first home, of my first attachments, are steeped in its benediction. Snatches from its liturgy, mottoes from its walls, legends from its windows, the awe of its music, the peace of its sanctuary—these woke the better man in me, gave me my first ideals, spelt out my first watchwords, introduced me to the things most high. If heaven lies about us in our infancy, heaven broke through the veil to me sacramentally in the worship

[3] The word "churchman" is used as less misleading than "Anglican" in American usage, to cover the membership of all branches of the Anglican communion. The intimation it sometimes conveys, that members of other Protestant churches are not really members of the Church, is the reverse of the writer's conviction. This footnote is an illustration of the problem of avoidance of misunderstanding involved in the use of even contemporary terms.

of that wonderful Church. It spoke to me. The peal of its bells and the accents of its prayer and praise yet reverberate from those old days in the corridors of my remembrance with a lifelong, incomparable charm. For me that Church has never failed. Early and late, from youth to middle age, the Church of my fathers has been to me the channel of wisdom and grace and has fed with divine nutrition my ultimate needs.

"I believe in the spirit of the Church of England—the spirit which through fifteen hundred years and more projected, adumbrated the doctrines. There is a soul in this august institution. That soul has stammered out its own unspeakable experience through the centuries in liturgies, hymnodies, theologies, confessions, homilies, debates. . . . The language intimates the experience, conserves it, transmits it; is a vessel in which the experience is held. The language must be there. But it is the soul which matters. . . . I believe in the soul of the Church of England; it is the Holy Ghost within those limits; I have been born again of it; all that is best in me is akin to it; my real self belongs to it and it is intrinsically mine."[4]

To any man who can honestly answer the call to discipleship in this spirit, the interpretation of clauses of the creed, important as they may be in other connections, is a relatively minor matter in this one, and should be so regarded by the Church as well as himself. If none of this is satisfactory to the rigid constructionist and his disposition to press doctrinal issues to the point of exclusion, our only answer must be that it was expressly intended not to be. We are addressing those who are not disposed to be thus rigid in doctrinal subscription unless compelled to be so by conscience. We say to them: Since you would not leave your political party because you disagreed with one plank in its platform, or your country because of disagreement with one or several

[4] Hubert Handley, *Theological Room* (1914), pp. 126–128.

clauses in her constitution, why leave your church for another in which your religious convictions and habits would in all likelihood be still less at home?

The retort will probably be promptly made that a church is neither a party nor a country, and that there are churches without creed or formularies. But the churchman must answer: To me my Church is far more than my party, and, as years go on, it becomes even more life of my life than my country, in the measure that religion is more than patriotism. The worship and work in your creedless church, real and natural as they are to you, would not make your church my spiritual home. My dissent in matters of detail from the church of my allegiance is a small thing compared to the differences in matters of moment that constitute my inability to join loyally in your fellowship. Your worship is to you austere; to me it is frigid. My problem in honesty is far simpler within the church of my fathers than in any other I know, and to leave her would be far less truthful an expression of my attitude than to remain and continue those creedal repetitions you deplore.

Just as wise liberals for the most part will not find the solution of their problem in leaving the church of their choice for another, neither will they find it in splitting their church asunder. For they know enough of the history of Protestantism to rate conscientious schism among the most disastrous of policies—yes, the most serious of sins—whether the responsibility for the formation of the new church lies heavier on those who rebel or those who expel. Least of all will they simply abandon the church altogether, for they count that course to be spiritual suicide, if not quite complete for themselves, then in all probability for their children.

All these refusals of the wise liberal to solve his problem in honesty by leaving the church of his first choice may be criticized as too exclusively self-regarding. But loyalty to the church supplies one that is not: the duty he owes

to the church of tomorrow. The great nineteenth century controversies in American as well as British Anglicanism, notably those produced by the Oxford movement, the evolutionary hypothesis, and the new historical criticism of the Bible, all were marked by ugly charges of dishonesty and treachery against the disturbing element, and invitations to depart as honest men to other churches.[5] When such fundamental doctrines were involved, one can quite understand the distress of the conservatives. If we recall, however, that had their wishes been complied with, our Anglican communion of today would have lost the contributions made, e.g., by Archbishop Temple, Maurice and Bishop Gore, not to mention the entire Oxford movement, sympathy for the distress of the conservative of yesterday is mingled with wonder that a liberal of yesterday like Bishop Gore has joined the company of those who play the part of Canute today and cry: Thus far and no farther. It is surprising that after such far-reaching changes as those which took place only yesterday in the doctrines of creation, inspiration, the Church and the Incarnation itself, a stand should be made at this time in the name of honesty upon strict adherence to the traditional view of the manner of the Incarnation and of the Resurrection.

The record of our Church's dealings with "the progressive—or, to use a neutral term, deviating—element in a religious community"[6] contains a pointed lesson for the undeviating majority of our day. The historical results of these former controversies should raise a question in their minds whether, after all, contemporary liberals have abandoned so much which is essential that they should be expelled.

[5] An illuminating account of some of the chief incidents from this viewpoint may be found in C. W. Emmet, *Conscience, Creeds and Critics* (1918), ch. 2.

[6] Sidgwick, *Ethics of Conformity and Subscription* (1870). This work is little known and hard to obtain but is in some respects more balanced than his later, better known argument.

In the light of this same record, the liberal dares to claim that his plain moral duty out of loyalty to his church and to the truth is not to depart alone or to secede with his fellow liberals as a body, but to remain, and hold on to those truths hard-won and liberties dearly purchased for him by the liberals of yesterday, which to his surprise he now finds many of his conservative brethren of this generation again desirous to deny him. The dogma of the literal infallibility of the Bible has taken the form among us of the literal infallibility of certain sections of the Bible mentioned in the creeds, and creedal rigorism is but a peculiarly Anglican equivalent of biblical Fundamentalism. Moreover, some who used to apologize for the Protestant Reformation have now begun to undo it, by their assertion that the primal authority of the Bible really means the accuracy of the biblical scholarship of the councils and the Fathers.

Loyalty not only impels some of us to the defense of the positions won by the liberals of the past, but also bids us prove by new advances that we are their true spiritual descendants. We believe in the infallibility neither of the ancient Councils nor of the modern conservatives who, by their lament that we are blown to and fro by every wind of doctrine, acquit us of a belief in our own infallibility. Trusting with all our hearts that the Church in our age has not been deprived of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which shall guide us into all truth, and persuaded that, as in all transition periods of Christian history, the same spirit is today weaving out of the divergent opinions of honest and reverent Christians the garment of a completer faith for our children's children, we pray for His guidance, and say with Arthur Hugh Clough:

> It fortifies my soul to know
> That, though I perish, Truth is so:
> That, howsoe'er I stray and range,
> Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.

I steadier step when I recall
That if I slip, Thou dost not fall.

We would, therefore, earnestly urge our rigorous conservative brethren to weigh well the lesson of the past, and in its light to decide the question of the right and duty of the conservative majority to expel a re-formulating minority (or individuals belonging to it) which sincerely protests its essential loyalty. The history of changes of opinion in human groups, secular and religious, is full of hasty and disastrous applications of conservative majority rule, and full also of instances of re-formulating minorities which eventually either won their point, or else, because their positions could not stand the test of time, silently disappeared. Furthermore, is not the former harshness that drove heretics out to found a church of their own truly still one of the chief causes for the perpetuation of a divided church?

But what limit shall be set to doctrinal re-formulation and change? In discussing the extent of difference which demands departure or justifies expulsion, Sidgwick[7] holds that a less exacting course is open to the conscientious layman, than to the clergyman, rebutting the view that "withdrawal is [his] clear duty in the case of any church which exacts, as a condition of admission to the privileges of membership, an express declaration of adhesion to certain doctrines selected as fundamental in the teaching of the church." In his judgment, this view "clearly does not correspond to the actual facts—the actual basis of common understanding on which a church in modern society holds together."

This reading of the case justifies a dissenting layman in continuing as a member of a church whose bond of union is *prima facie* doctrinal, even if his dissent be on a point of doctrine selected as fundamental by his church, provided it is not so regarded by him. Sidgwick holds that this is by no means to be construed as "merely a

[7] *Practical Ethics*, ch. 5.

concession to human weakness . . . to be firmly rejected in determining the moral ideal"; for "the service which religion undeniably renders society lies primarily in its influence on the moral and social feelings." This relaxing of doctrinal stringency "tends to keep this influence alive in many cases in which a strict doctrinalism would tend to destroy it." Even the baptismal and confirmation pledge of belief in the Apostles' Creed, he regards "as relaxed by the common understanding," while "if an individual is in doubt, any serious danger of bad faith may usually be avoided by making his position clear to others who do not hold his views." As for joining in worship, "the mere presence at a religious service—by a clear common understanding—does not imply more than a general sympathy with its drift and aims. . . . The effect of public worship on the worshipper is so complex and so various, that it would be inexpedient to attempt to lay down a definite general rule."

The above exceedingly latitudinarian attitude toward the ethical problem of the layman is gladly adopted in such a typical Anglican work as Canon R. L. Ottley's "Christian Ideas and Ideals," and one may fairly claim that as far as use and wont can put the stamp of lawfulness upon it the position is now well established within as well as outside the Church. Those who reject it are asked to consider the argument later on in this chapter on the moral obligation of the clergy as addressed, in substance though not in form, to the layman's problem as they see it.

Another principle which has been strenuously argued is that the position of the clergyman in this matter is no whit different from that of the layman. Dr. A. V. G. Allen[8] assembled a strong array of historical evidence to prove that the post-Reformation Anglican clergyman as-

[8] *Freedom in the Church* (1907), ch. 3.

sumed at ordination no added or more stringent doctrinal obligation, and particularly no new attitude to the creeds, but continued under the same rule he had been under as a layman.

As for the presbyter's promise to "minister the Doctrine . . . of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church hath received the same, according to the Commandments of God," Dr. Allen disposes completely of the idea common today that the clergyman thus commits himself to an irrevocable acceptance of an unchanging and unchangeable set of doctrines just as they are given to him in ecclesiastical tradition. He interprets this vow, in agreement with the preceding and following promises, as an appeal not to ecclesiastical tradition, but to the Bible, in which the Reformers who exacted this promise of presbyters in their own day found the authority for abandoning much of the doctrinal tradition.

In agreement with Dr. Allen's position, Bishop Henson writes: "When personal belief is in question,—the quality of doctrine involved in the sincere profession of discipleship,—there can be no difference between preacher and layman. Many current controversies would, perhaps, wear a different aspect if this simple, and indeed self-evident, proposition were applied to them."[9]

Despite all the theoretical considerations and the notable names that may be urged in support of this reading of the clergy's obligation, it is hardly possible, in forming an ethical judgment of this kind, to disregard the actual situation, and this agrees very ill with Dr. Allen's historical argument or Bishop Henson's "self-evident proposition." The ordination vows of conformity, the official teaching function of the clergy, their conduct of public worship and their general responsibility for their people are but the special ecclesiastical equivalent of the responsibilities assumed by an officer of any organization, and the stricter standards to which by general understand-

[9] *The Liberty of Prophesying*, p. 69.

ing they are to be held have their obvious analogies in secular societies. Without joining in the popular gibe about clergy who "don't believe what they are paid to teach," a conscientious clergyman may well refuse to believe that Sidgwick's conclusions concerning the layman are equally applicable to him.

This does not mean to imply that the Church should or does allow its lay members to indulge in all manner of strange doctrine, while holding its clergy to a rigorous and elaborate orthodoxy. Her doctrines are intended for both groups; but both before and after ordination she inquires more closely into the beliefs held by those whose duty it is to teach doctrine than into those of their students, the laity. The school-board which recently discharged an instructor who was teaching her children that the earth was flat did not, presumably, expel all the pupils whom she had indoctrinated!

On the other hand, the inevitable consequence of the enforcement of a rigorous standard of conformity for the clergy, which is advocated by extreme conservatives inside our Church, and by radicals outside, would be to commit the leadership of the Church to its least progressive element. For any minister who disagreed with any position expressed in liturgy or creeds would either have to resign his ministry or be deposed. Although liturgical reform and doctrinal change are almost entirely the work of the clergy, yet under this rule they alone would be debarred from originating or advocating them.

To the extremist, whether he be "Evangelical," "Catholic," "Fundamentalist" or "Rationalist," such a rigorous purge of the clergy of all the churches may seem both desirable and ethically imperative. Far greater numbers, however, opposed to party control within the Church, regardless of which party it may be, agree that a sudden revival of long-discarded ecclesiastical methods in the enforcement of reactionary doctrinal rigidity, though based on plausible appeals for honesty, would be fatal to

the Christian church and life of today and of tomorrow. The lessons of the past cannot safely be ignored in that way. The Church has shown itself in recent decades wisely reluctant to exercise a stringent doctrinal control over her clergy or to expel those who felt compelled to depart from tradition in some respects. The individual has been increasingly left to make his own decision, and his teaching allowed to find in time its due place and influence.

It is easy to say that essentials may not honestly be doubted or denied by those who wish to stay within the fold, but the determination of what these minimum doctrinal essentials may be is committed in our Church neither to a single bishop nor a quorum of the House of Bishops. The success of a recent experiment by the Presbyterian General Assembly in this direction is hardly so great as to inspire much confidence that the time has come for such action in our Church.

As for the individual's own decision, it is bound to vary widely. If he be of a keenly theological mind, dissent on even a minor point of doctrine may so outweigh all other considerations that, unless he can foresee a speedy change on the part of the Church, he may feel bound to leave it. If he is a mystic, or if the drama and beauty of worship are central to him, or if he is an enthusiast for the social gospel, doctrinal divergences may exercise only secondary control over his decision. His chief concern holds him to his Church.

But is the liberal churchman faced, as conservatives within and modernists without the church tell him, with a choice between exile and untruthfulness? Must he either repeat the Creeds as a loyal liar or else as a truthful traitor say farewell?

His first response is a frank *tu quoque* addressed to his fellow churchmen of every party. The issue of untruthfulness simply cannot be confined to the interpretation of a few selected clauses in the Creed. Nor is it, in

fact, so confined by the critics outside our Church. The creedal clauses concerning the Ascension and the Second Coming of Christ are obvious instances which would put this same issue of untruthfulness before many clergymen and laymen of every party. Bishop Gore himself is one of them, for he seems to be confident[10] that the writers of Scripture and the composers of the Creeds intended their statements on these points to be taken not literally but symbolically, while many students assert the opposite, and, therefore, pass a verdict of ethical condemnation upon the symbolic interpretation of these clauses.

Space is lacking to do justice to Bishop Gore's careful argument in support of his distinction between the sincerity of the use of symbolism in arriving at the significance of these and certain other clauses, and the dishonesty of a similar interpretation of the clauses concerning the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of Christ, because the latter lie within the field of "our present human experience." Canon Glazebrook and Dr. Sanday[11] have dealt with it in detail, the latter concluding: "The defensive position which it is sought to construct really breaks down. The distinctions on which it turns seem to me quite untenable. They are invented *ad hoc,* to save the common, literal interpretation of points in the Gospel history, and have the artificial character of all such inventions."

The deacon's affirmative answer to the question: "Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?" is another instance which may be cited to remind all the clergy that on this issue of untruthfulness the critics outside our Church have some ground for viewing us as all in the same boat. Those of us who are convinced that all twentieth century persons using ancient creeds and liturgies are on trial and must

[10] *Symbolism in Religion,* in *Constructive Quarterly* (Mar., 1914). See also *The Basis of Anglican Fellowship.*

[11] Glazebrook, *The Letter and the Spirit* (1920), ch. 1. Sanday, *Bishop Gore's Challenge to Criticism* (1914), pp. 13–16.

prepare a brief in answer to the same widespread ethical criticism agree with Canon Rashdall:[12] "What is not open to any man of common intellectual consistency or common moral honesty is to accuse the one kind of non-literal interpretation of dishonesty, while he claims for himself or concedes to his friends the other instance of non-literal interpretation." The conservative may contend that the opinions he shares and the interpretations he admits represent no abandonment of essential doctrines, while those he opposes are guilty of just that. But this does not settle the point of verbal veracity. Moreover, the liberal feels that the event will show that the questions today in dispute are no more, nay are less essential than those on which dispute formerly existed but is now at an end. It is really a matter of the first importance that the whole Church should have its eyes opened. The plain fact is that the common-sense views of veracity echoed in that statement from the Pastoral with which this chapter began, popular though they may be and self-evident as they may sound, on second thought place all members of a church which retains an historic liturgy and ancient creeds in a hopeless dilemma.

One solution offered of it, all too odiously familiar in the practice of the past, and still commended by many within the Church, is that of silence, or in technical language, "reserve." There is indeed a truth in the doctrine of reserve, the truth underlying the exhortations not to "preach one's doubts," and not to "disturb simple faith." For the blunt statement of doubt and disbelief, especially if followed by no statement of what the speaker *does* believe, is often a half-truth more misleading as to the speaker's own position, and more needlessly disastrous to the hearers, than silence would be. But this admission is quite consistent with a strong conviction that the reserve, widely commended and still more widely practiced by both liberals and conservatives, has been in the past

[12] In *Anglican Liberalism* (1908), p. 99.

and is today—though its extent at present is probably much less—one of the most serious moral defects chargeable to the churches.

Is it not time that we all realized the general condemnation the policy of reserve has evoked, the disastrous misunderstandings between the clergy and the laity it has caused, its unhappy influence upon the teaching work of the clergy, and the extent of unbelief among the young which has resulted unintentionally, to be sure, from our worthy desire not to disturb the faith of the old? The popular notion that "a man suppresses his convictions in order to save his orthodoxy from suspicion" while certainly not the complete explanation, is nevertheless the inevitable outcome of this policy. A sympathetic treatment of the traditional belief in all our teaching, an emphasis upon the fact that a positive equivalent for it is part of the content of the new doctrine, and an absence of sophomoric finality and scorn throughout our discussions, are fortunately not merely compatible with the strictest veracity, but demanded thereby, and these contain the truth which lies at the bottom of the well of clerical reserve.[13]

Equally unsatisfactory are three other tests:

(1) A distinction has recently been drawn between doubt and denial for use in helping us out of our dilemma. We are told, for example, that if study raises doubt of the certainty of the Virgin Birth, one may honestly repeat the Creed until either further study clears up that doubt or definite denial of the Virgin Birth takes its place. The difficulty about this genuinely charitable exception in favor of the mind perplexed on this subject is that the student of the New Testament does not find his doubts settled by a brief course of reading in the best scholarship, selected for him by the conservative. Nor does he come to a speedy and dogmatic denial, for he is not the belated

[13] Rashdall's defense of reserve, in the discussion mentioned, won the assent of neither Sidgwick nor Bosanquet.

victim of the scientific materialism of yesterday, as some of the conservative spokesmen quite honestly and sympathetically take him to be. But we are frankly very doubtful of the historicity of the Virgin Birth; to us the supposed fact seems of slight religious significance, and the doctrine no more essential to our belief in the Incarnation than the same doctrine was to the belief in the Incarnation held by St. Paul and St. John.

The above concession hardly covers this rather settled conclusion, and we are the less desirous to take advantage of it because we are convinced that the apparent affirmation of belief presents essentially the same problem in veracity, whether the inability to affirm categorically be the result of temporary or settled doubt, or of denial. Our cause here is one with that of the out and out deniers of the Virgin Birth who are champions of the other tradition, found in the New Testament, that Jesus was the child of Mary and Joseph.

(2) Of still less aid than the distinction between doubt and denial is that between creedal facts and creedal theories. For the stake of religion is ever in the interpretation and not in the fact itself; the important phrase is not: "born of the *Virgin* Mary," but "conceived by the Holy Ghost," which is essentially doctrinal, and a "fact" only in the sense that "He descended into hell" and "He ascended into heaven" are facts. But these last, we are told, are "obviously symbolic." To stake the truth of the Incarnation on a disputed "fact" in the realm of biology, to be sure, is neither the first nor the last error of religious materialism, but it is a tragic mistake. And in any case, the ethical problem of verbal veracity arises alike in the case of "fact," "symbol" and "doctrine."

(3) As for the test of "original meaning," the baptismal use of the creed, and still more the Thirty-nine Articles, are perhaps illustrations of an attempt to base the unity of a church upon a doctrinal statement; but if so, their history is an irrefutable demonstration of its

failure. For language, in any one form that can be devised, especially religious language, is inadequate to serve as a permanent symbol of doctrinal belief; and doctrine stops changing and becomes fixed only when it is dead doctrine.

For this double reason, the criticism in the Unitarian statement of "religious teachers who play with words in the most solemn relations of life, who make their creeds mean what they were not originally intended to mean," though it echoes the statement in the Pastoral Letter of 1894 that "fixedness of interpretation is of the essence of the Creeds," will not bear examination. With such a canon of veracity, one could with equal justice charge the signers of the Unitarian statement with untruth for their reference to "the Unitarian pioneers who were obliged, for honor's sake, to go apart and after the way which men call heresy worship the God of their fathers." The God of the theology of those courageous pioneers was not identical with the God of the theology of all of their ancestors back to the time when the word "God" was first uttered by their primeval forbears. Yet the strict interpretation of the standard commended by their latest successors to the members of other churches would seem to demand grim acceptance on their own part of a most primitive conception of God. So, also, it is hardly to be expected that those who affirm belief in the fatherhood of God shall confine themselves to its original meaning, that Jehovah is the father of the nation Israel.

As for the ancient creeds, certainty in regard to the original meaning of "the communion of saints" is not attainable. Again, though modern doctrines of the omnipotence of God and of creation which are held by persons of unimpeachable orthodoxy can find verbal shelter under the phrase, "God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," they are so variable among themselves that they cannot all claim to be the original meaning of that creedal clause, even if it be assumed that the mind of

the ancient church had the strictest unanimity on these points. The same is true of the Second Coming of Christ. Thus all generalization about "fixedness of interpretation" and "original meaning" falls to the ground. The modern disagreement over the Virgin Birth, the most recent dispute, is not different in kind from many earlier ones.

The Dallas Pastoral in Sec. 2 states that "the Creeds give and require no theories or explanations of the facts which they rehearse. No explanation is given . . . of the *nature* of the resurrection body, Christ's or ours." This statement looms large in view of the fact that the bishops all knew that in the Greek and Latin forms of the Apostles' Creed the phrase reads: "The resurrection of the *flesh*." Is the inference justified that the present House of Bishops has abandoned the idea of 1894, that fixedness of interpretation is of the essence of the Creeds? If so, the Unitarians are left alone in attempting to lay upon our shoulders the burden of "original meaning," which neither their fathers nor our chief pastors are able to bear.

With an ancient document, the test of original meaning must yield to the principle of *common understanding*. "The common understanding may change gradually, so that certain phrases in certain relations may come to be understood in a sense quite different from that which they originally bore, or which the words would convey if used in other connections. . . . There seem to be two chief forms of this process: (1) words originally used literally come to be used metaphorically, and (2) words originally intended to be understood without qualification come to be used with tacit qualifications and reserves which materially modify their meaning."[14]

The latter variety of change is clearly illustrated by the deacon's vow of unfeigned belief in all the canonical scriptures. This vow was used two generations ago by conservatives, to defend the view of the Bible as abso-

[14] *Practical Ethics*, pp. 157, 159.

lutely inerrant. Their contemporaries who had come to hold new views of inspiration maintained their right to their ministry, introducing into the interpretation of this vow, its limitation to the moral and religious teaching of the Bible as culminating in Christ. Today this view is generally admitted to be consistent with the vow, and biblical Fundamentalism is not an issue in the Anglican communion. A similar case is found in the anathemas of the Athanasian Creed, still recited in the Church of England, but with a very common avowal of dissent from the original meaning. This avowal has reached the stage of a common understanding.

It is the other form of change in common understanding which is involved in the present controversy; namely, where words once used literally come in the course of time to be used metaphorically. This is usually called symbolic interpretation, of which the Ascension clause is an illustration. The story in the first chapter of Acts clearly implies the ancient popular idea of a heaven located above the sky, and the mass of believers so understood the creedal clause for centuries. But there came the time when educated Christians knew better, and with the disappearance of the ancient cosmology from men's thoughts, the adoption of symbolic interpretation of this clause has spread. The same is true of the Descent into hell, and the Session at the right hand of God.

But the new attitude to the Bible characteristic of our time has raised the question: are the stories of the birth and resurrection of our Lord, and the expectation of our own resurrection, in the same class, and should the creedal clauses now be subject to the same kind of interpretation? Is it truthful for one who avows his doubt or denial of the Virgin Birth, while confessing his belief in the Incarnation, to repeat the phrase: Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary?

Some argue that as such and such a Father took the Descent into hell as symbolic, we may do so; but none

of them took the Virgin Birth so, and therefore we may not. This is not an ethical distinction, nor a Protestant one, and therefore will not be argued here. Equally unsatisfactory is the distinction already mentioned between events inside the field of our present human experience, and those outside it (p. 138).

The real distinction, and the ground for it, are suggested by Sidgwick. "Ordinarily a man may choose his own words to express his belief, and therefore he ought, generally speaking, to choose words which appear to him freest from ambiguity. But where words are prescribed for him, this choice is precluded, and in such a case, I concede, he should be held to speak truthfully if he employs terms in any sense which they will fairly admit, according to the common use of language. I think that this is the rule which a conscientious man practically applies in any of the cases in which he is asked to sign a document which he has had no share in drawing up."[15] If this is true of a contemporary document, surely it is incomparably truer of an ancient one expressing doctrinal belief.

Any avowed interpretation is here conceded by Sidgwick to be ethically admissible, provided it does not go beyond a natural meaning, according to the common use of language. Of course this limit is not always easy to agree upon. But many liberals will admit that, though they feel little or no verbal difficulty in the case of the Resurrection clauses, no room can fairly be made for a human father in the language of the Virgin Birth clause. Therefore, whether doubters or deniers of the Virgin Birth, we admit that symbolic interpretation here is, on the purely verbal point, different from the symbolic interpretation of the Ascension, though no whit farther from the original meaning. It is worth noting, also, that Canon Rashdall drew from Sidgwick the admission that frankness removes all substantial unveracity, and places upon

[15] *Practical Ethics*, p. 155.

the Church herself the responsibility for the individual's continuance in the ministry. The likelihood of her deposing a man for doubt or denial of the Virgin Birth is apparently not great today.

Yet a formal discrepancy between the words and the interpretation given to them by the liberal remains, and is one reason why an increasing number of clergymen and laymen desire either a new common understanding on this clause, or a revision of the formularies, or their permissive use. Meanwhile, the following alternatives to symbolic interpretation have been suggested:

(1) Agreement with the *original purpose* of the disputed clauses, and indeed of all the clauses of the Creeds, is the true meaning to which those who use the Creeds assent. It is argued that the purpose of the Birth clause was to insist on the Incarnation and on the genuine humanity of our Lord against the Docetists; that the anti-heretical purpose of the Resurrection clauses was to insist upon the survival beyond death of His full personality and ours, and upon the fateful character of the deeds done in the body, particularly the sins of the flesh. This is called by Professor Bethune-Baker[16] "religious interpretation." It is justified by the primary purpose of the Creeds as tests of Christian discipleship and of doctrine in its relation thereto, and if avowed, involves no substantial unveracity.

(2) One may go to the other extreme, and say with Professor Lake: "As a matter of Church discipline and custom, we recite the Creed in our liturgical services, but we desire either to see it dropped or preserved merely as a monument of the history of the Church. It is in this last sense that we accept it."[17] This puts the Creed, so to speak, in quotation marks, and evacuates it of all present religious and doctrinal significance—a somewhat drastic solution. Dr. Sanday, with his fondness for the

[16] *Faith of the Apostles' Creed* (1918) *passim.*
[17] *Hibbert Journ.*, 16:634.

nuance, suggested instead of "monument" the phrase "landmarks and guides to direction." The difference is considerable.

(3) Still others press for the common understanding, and eventually for an official enactment declaring that the recital of the Creed indicates only a *general accord* with this statement of the Church's doctrine, and not a specific agreement, literal or symbolic, with its every clause. Acceptance is sufficient of the essentials, as stated in the Catechism; or of those beliefs verifiable in Christian experience; or simply let it suffice that, by subscribing to the Creed as a whole, the man declares himself heart, soul and mind a Christian.[18]

For this proposal, in so far as the Creed is used in worship, a strong case can be made. The use of formulæ which here and there, if taken strictly, are at variance with one's real belief, is inevitable if any group of people are to worship in the same words. When we use in worship earlier forms of doctrinal statement, with an open avowal that they do not all now express scientifically or in our modern modes of thinking the way that the Church believes these things today, we are truthful in the identical sense that any liturgical worship using ancient forms is truthful. The quotation from Mr. Handley (above, p.128) is worth rereading as a tribute to the value and the truthfulness of such worship.

But the case is sometimes overstated. If the Creeds were used only in formal worship and on the basis of such an agreement, most of us would, it is said, have no more difficulty over them than with the details of innumerable hymns or many a psalm, and the Creeds, like the Lord's Prayer, would be acts of Christian worship as universal as the use of that great Christian heritage. The conservative would no more attack our honesty than he would that of a foreign-born citizen who joins in the singing of

[18] Cf. Sanday, quoted by H. L. Jackson, *Eschatology of Jesus*, p. 376, in a chapter on the Eschatology of the Creeds.

"America," even to the line: "Land where my fathers died." Nor would the liberal feel scrupulous or raise objections, any more than the immigrant asks for a revision of "America," or remains scrupulously and self-consciously silent during the "untruthful" line.[19]

But to cancel so much of the special significance of the Creeds in worship is not as small a matter as it seems to many in an age when the entire doctrinal aspect of religion has fallen, even in the Church, so low in popular evaluation as to produce the saying, "It doesn't make any difference what you believe if you live the right kind of a life." Because the Creeds are not *primarily* doctrinal, it does not follow that they are no more significantly doctrinal than the rest of the service. In them speaks the *mind* of the Church, and it is the *mind* of the worshipper which is challenged to accord here more than elsewhere. The accord may be general—and who does not know that among hosts of laymen and many clergy, it is now only general?—but it should be none the less doctrinal.

This becomes, of course, clearer when we recall the use of the Creed in the Baptismal Office and in the Catechism, as well as the reference in the Confirmation service. These, taken together, make the Apostles' Creed the central formulary for the doctrine of our Church. Not only is the demand for a strict and literal conformity to every clause impossible, but the Catechism, which tells us what we "chiefly learn from these articles of our belief," warrants a certain stress in interpreting it as a unity. General consent has come to recognize a wide variance of permissible interpretations, and public avowal of new departures from the traditional view is the sign of a continuance of this process. The proposal to return to the older usage: "We believe," instead of the individual-

[19] The suggestion that by singing the Creed this would be made clear is in odd contrast to the fact that it is one branch of the strict interpreters who do now sing the Creeds!

istic: "I believe," has the advantage of presenting the Creeds as standards instead of shibboleths, and of affording relief to the undeniably more literal modern conscience. But general doctrinal assent remains, and is the liberal's meaning when he repeats the Creeds.

Their liturgical and educational use will long continue, and most liberals probably share George Tyrrell's position: "I say it as a quasi-sacramental act of association with the corporate life of Christian people, past, present and future . . . 'We believe' was the older formula, as it is that of the *Te Deum,* and it gives us the true sense . . . The only norm I acknowledge is . . . that of the slowly forming but divinely guided mind of the living Church of all times and all places, of which mind the Creed in its present form is the only authorized expression."[20]

The veracity of Anglicanism as a whole rests on the profound truth of the continuity of developing Christian life and thought; in the last analysis, it is the concept of an infallible period of the mind of the Church, which is now trying to tyrannize over us, that must yield. While we must contend that no formulary is final, we shall be slow to revise and still more reluctant to abandon. The time for alternative formularies seems to some near, to others far; but both now and then we shall strive to worship God in spirit and in truth.

To those liberals who maintain their right to membership and ministry in our Church, their ethical defense against the charge of dishonesty seems adequate. If it did not, they would not remain in the Church. But they feel keenly the charge of dishonesty, whether it comes from their conservative brethren or from critics outside our Church. Knowing that the charge is made roundly against all members of a Church which in the twentieth century retains the ancient Creeds, they ask all Episcopalians and Anglicans to consider whether we are not paying a very high price for our present creedal usage.

[20] *Lex Credendi,* p. x.

After frank discussion and friendly conference have made our positions clear, let us see whether within our communion the charge of dishonesty may not be withdrawn and then let us agree on measures which will make our honesty clearer to those outside our Church. These same measures will remove the intellectual and ethical barriers undeniably presented by the ancient creeds to some of the most intelligent and conscientious youths of our time, as they pause upon our threshold. Let us help and not hinder these younger brethren to whom we must commit the future of the Church we love.

FOR DISCUSSIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF THIS ESSAY THE FOLLOWING MAY BE CONSULTED:

The writings of Allen, Bethune-Baker, Henson, Jackson, Rashdall and Sidgwick already cited.

W. A. Curtis, *A History of Creeds and Confessions* (1911), ch. 25.

C. W. Emmet, *Conscience, Creeds and Critics* (1918).

L. Parks, *The Crisis of the Churches* (1922), chs. 13–14.

W. Sanday and N. P. Williams, *Form and Content in the Christian Tradition, a Discussion* (1916).

VII

THE CREED AS A TEST OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

By

James Thayer Addison

SYNOPSIS

Meaning of membership dependent on meaning of the Church. The New Testament ideal. The Church a fellowship rooted in a personal relation to a living Lord. The Church as the Body of Christ. Hence the Church a living organism. This conception contrasted with idea of Church as a sect—an association of like-minded individuals. Membership in an organism contrasted with membership in a sect. As analogies, the Family and Nation compared with a club. Application of these principles to question of a test. Test of loyalty needed for membership in an organism. Test of uniformity of opinion needed for membership in a sect. Anglican conception of Church as an organism. Defects of Creed as test for such membership. A simpler and sounder test proposed. True place and permanent value of Creed.

VII

THE CREED AS A TEST OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

The Apostles' Creed is a subject of present controversy chiefly because it is a test of membership in the Church. The question whether or not it ought to be a test of membership is therefore of central importance. But it cannot be answered without first discussing the meaning of membership; and the meaning of membership is dependent, in turn, upon our conception of the nature and significance of the Church.

The meaning of the Church in the New Testament is of prime importance because the Scriptures are our standard of Christian life and thought. The burden of proof will always be upon those who hold a conception of the Church which differs clearly from that held by the apostles.

What the Church meant to Jesus is a question upon which Christians disagree. Some believe that He had no idea of founding a Church. Others believe that He deliberately established and organized a new Institution and even that He devoted the forty days before His ascension to arranging many details of its doctrine, discipline, and worship. But all will agree that He was the center of a group of close followers and that from this group grew the Apostolic Church. This belief is common property, supported by the clearest evidence of history. It is, of course, an irreducible minimum. But for that very reason we may safely assume that even if Jesus did more, the nature and meaning of the institution which He may have established must be interpreted in the light of the group or fellowship which He certainly did estab-

lish and of which the Church of the apostles is plainly the outcome.

The essential characteristic of Christ's group of followers appears in the fact that it was a fellowship rooted in a personal relation to a living Lord. What united them to Christ as followers and to one another as fellows was personal loyalty to One of whose power in their lives they were witnesses and of whose destiny as Messiah many of them were confident. Even at this early stage we thus find among the members of the fellowship both personal trust and a common belief. But the personal trust was the source of the belief, and the belief was of the simplest character.

Precisely the same characteristic marks the group of Christ's followers after His death. It remained a fellowship rooted in a personal relation to a living Lord.[1] Only because these followers knew by experience, direct and indirect, that their Lord was living, did their fellowship continue unbroken. The Resurrection was accepted as a fact; but it was not the belief nor the fact which held them together. It was their continuous loyalty to a Christ who was alive forevermore. This fellowship was quickened and brought vividly before the common consciousness by the experience of Pentecost. That experience did not create the fellowship, for before the descent of the Spirit "they were all with one accord in one place." But at Pentecost the Christian fellowship was confirmed and enlivened by a common experience so convincing that thereafter "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul" and even "had all things in common." "It was in relationship with one another that men continuously realized their relation to Christ and to God through him."[2] The "fellowship of the Holy Spirit," whatever other shades of meaning it may have,

[1] Cf. Bethune-Baker, *Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 22*f*.

[2] C. A. A. Scott in *The Spirit*, p. 138.

means first of all the fellowship created and sustained by the Holy Spirit, the fellowship in which the Spirit reveals and expresses Himself. That fellowship is the Church.

St. Paul thinks of the Church not only as "the fellowship of the Holy Spirit," but also as "the Body of Christ." For the two conceptions are essentially the same. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit, the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ are with him but varying terms for the one reality. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. And since the fellowship is the abiding-place and organ of the Spirit, it is, by that very fact, the abiding-place and organ of the risen and glorified Lord. It is the Body of Christ. Here again, then, we may note how a sense of personal relationship, grounded in faith, continues to be the source of a definite belief—a doctrine, if we choose to call it so—that Jesus is the Christ, the crucified, risen, and ascended Lord.

From the time of St. Paul to the present day there has persisted this conception of the Church as "the Community of those who have been drawn to Christ and in which His Spirit lives."[3] That conception has not been confined to any one branch of the Church, nor has it anywhere been the one clear and controlling idea of the Church at any time since the Apostolic Age. Rather has it endured as one strand or element in the Church idea, never wholly dominating yet never wholly forgotten. According to this scriptural ideal, the Church is to be interpreted and defined as a *living organism* growing out of the personal relation of its members to God through Christ.[4] Its character as an organism is emphasized not only by the sacramental conception of the Church as the Body of Christ, but also by the individual sacraments

[3] William Temple in *Foundations*, p. 350.

[4] Cf. A. C. Headlam, *Doctrine of the Church and Christian Reunion*, pp. 76, 226. F. J. Hall, *The Church and the Sacramental System*, p. 44. W. Lock in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 373*f*.

themselves. Baptism is defined organically as a re-birth or as a "grafting into the body." The Lord's Supper is interpreted organically as the feeding of the faithful upon the Body and Blood of Christ. And these same sacraments serve likewise to interpret the living organism as growing out of the personal relation of its members to God through Christ. In Baptism the believer is signed with the sign of the Cross and baptized into the name of the Triune God. In the Lord's Supper the present Christ is the unifying bond, at once the source and object of a common faith.

The Church of today as a world-wide institution, with its theology and its sacraments, even with its schisms and divisions, its sins and its failures, may be far removed from that little group of Jesus' disciples from which it has evolved. But in so far as it is conceived as an organism, it still remains, as truly as was that early group, a fellowship rooted in a personal relation to a living Lord. Its unity is a unity in *Christ*.

In contrast with this ideal of the Church is another ideal by which the Church is interpreted and defined as an association of individuals who think alike on religious subjects. This conception, even more plainly than the other, has not been confined to any one branch of the Church, nor has it anywhere been adopted as the one controlling idea. But it has long existed as a strand or element. It has everywhere tinged and infected the conception of the Church as an organism. Though never found in a state quite naked and unashamed, it can best be understood if defined in its extreme form, unredeemed by compromise and unmellowed by a saving tradition. According to this view, the Church is not a living organism but an association deliberately organized. It is a society consciously formed for mutual benefit by a number, large or small, of individuals. They come together as Christians for a Christian purpose and the organization they form is a Christian society; but the bond which

unites them *in this particular society* is not a common loyalty to Christ but the capacity to think alike on certain religious subjects. And with this capacity goes the conviction that the particular religious subjects on which they think alike are of sufficient importance to justify the formation of the society and its perpetual distinction from all other similar organizations. The fellowship which they agree to maintain is the fellowship of kindred *minds*. The unity which they seek to achieve is a unity based upon intellectual uniformity. *As such* it is not primarily a unity in Christ.

Here, then, we have two contrasting conceptions of the Church. We have sundered them more sharply than they are ever sundered in real life, but as conceptions they are radically opposed. The one presents the Church as an organism; the other presents the Church as a sect. In one the Church is reconciling and inclusive; in the other, it is divisive and exclusive. For one the Church is analogous to the Family or the Nation; for the other it is analogous to a club.

As a corollary to these two ideals of the Church are two conceptions of the meaning of membership in the Church. For membership in an organism is different from membership in a sect. How the two types of membership differ may be seen in part by the analogies that we have suggested. The members of a family are part of a living organism. The relationship is a blood relationship of a deeply personal nature. Growing out of this close kinship and of the association which it involves is the loyalty which cements and perpetuates the group. Because it is a system of personal relations vitalized by loyalty, the family is capable of reconciling and including the most diverse characteristics, the most varied temperaments, and the most lively intellectual differences. Uniformity of ideas is neither customary nor necessary. No one tests the warmth and vitality of a family's life by the capacity of its members to agree upon a common

statement of opinion. What holds them together is the loyalty that arises from mutual love. What alone can break the family bond is the failure of loyal love. The test of genuine, as distinct from legal, membership is the desire to maintain that loyalty in love. Similar are the characteristics of membership in the Nation. The Nation, too, is an organism in which all are members one of another, for the Nation is not merely the arithmetical total of its individual inhabitants. It is a living body into which all its members are grafted. Every one of them is either born into it or re-born into it. And, again, the bond which unites them is a common loyalty. For that very reason, too, their unity is a living organic unity growing out of a personal relationship. It is not the result of uniformity of opinion. It is therefore not only possible but inevitable that the Nation should include members of every type and class, that it should reconcile in one body citizens of diverse temperament and of varied convictions. The only fundamental requirement for membership is loyalty.

But when from these organic groups, with their living continuity and their close-knit bonds, we pass to mere organizations artificially created for specific purposes, the concept of membership changes. A club or association is deliberately formed for practical ends. The conformity of its members to certain rules or standards or opinions is a prime necessity. A certain type of loyalty may be an appropriate outgrowth of such conformity; but loyalty is not the root of the matter, for the relationships that arise are not primarily personal. They are but incidental to that uniformity of ideas and that conformity to rules which are the first requisites of an orderly association.

It is important that members of a Republican club should all be Republicans and all believers in the party system. It is important that members of an Archæological Institute should all be acquainted with archæology and believers in its value. Of course, human beings cannot

associate regularly for any worthy purpose without forming personal ties of cherished value. But in mere associations such relationships are neither central nor essential. They are by-products which do not radically determine the meaning of membership. Members of such clubs are simply added to the list; they are not grafted into a body. In no sense of the word is one born into a Country Club, nor can the process of joining a Geographical Society be viewed as a process of regeneration. And precisely the same difference is felt when we consider what is involved in the loss of membership. For failing to pay dues one is dropped from the list, or by becoming a Democrat or failing in some other fashion to agree with majority opinion, one resigns and retires. These simple actions mean hardly more to the organization than a bit of bookkeeping. There is involved no rending of an organism. No deep questions of love and loyalty are necessarily involved. There is nothing to correspond with the process by which one becomes a traitor in exile or a son disowned or a wife betrayed and deserted. A member has not been torn out of the body; a stone has simply been removed from the pile.

Analogies, of course, are at best imperfect, and those we have here suggested are used only for what they are worth. The Family and the Nation differ from the Church for this reason among others, that within them there is no central figure to correspond with the figure of Christ in whom can center the love and loyalty of His members. And then, too, the most sectarian conception of the Church has never reduced it to the level of a mere club. Yet these human analogies indicate fairly enough the lines along which there tend to travel the two conceptions of Church membership. If the Church is essentially an organic group united in personal loyalty to a living Lord, membership means membership in a living body. If the Church is essentially an organization of like-minded

individuals agreed upon a common platform, then membership is the membership of units in an aggregation.

We come now to the crux of the matter. If the conception of the Church determines the conception of membership, the conception of membership ought to determine the test of membership. It is only with an eye to the meaning of membership that we can safely provide a genuine test. Confronted with an applicant for membership, what shall we try to test? Shall we test his opinions regarding certain facts and doctrines to see whether they correspond with a fixed standard? Or shall we test his loyalty to Christ and his capacity for fruitful and helpful life within the Christian fellowship? We can do both, but we cannot do both by the same method. The method must be relevant to the test. If it is suited to one test, it is not suited to the other. In making our choice, therefore, we shall betray which conception of the Church we regard as fundamental and essential. Judging from the tests applied in the present and in the past, some branches of the Church emphasize the organic conception, and some the sectarian conception, while others attempt to combine the two. There is great need for clarification of the issue and for the intelligent adaptation of means to end.

If we are wholly or primarily concerned with testing loyalty to Christ and readiness for Christian fellowship, the test must be of the simplest character. Because it is concerned with personal relationship and personal attitude, it must be primarily a test of personal faith and purpose, a test which is concerned only with that degree of belief which, as in apostolic times, is the inevitable implication of genuine faith. Mere correctness of doctrinal opinion is here irrelevant. With our candidate before us, we must seek assurance as to how he feels, what he wants, and what he is ready to do about it. Does he love Christ as Lord and Saviour and trust in Him; does he desire to belong to His Body; and will he try to be a worthy member of His Fellowship? The only proper

test here is a confession and a pledge, which must stand as *prima facie* evidence of faith and purpose. "Dost thou believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and wilt thou be baptized into His Name?" That is the only type of test rationally adapted to the end in view and the only type of test suggested by the New Testament for admission into the Christian Society.[5]

If, however, we are wholly or primarily concerned with securing uniformity of opinion, we shall offer the candidate a fixed statement of historical facts and theological doctrines. These will include such facts and doctrines as our particular branch of the Church may consider essential. They may be few and simple or numerous and elaborate; but the principle will be the same; and because of that principle the test will lend itself readily to the purposes of sects and to the promotion of the sectarian spirit.

In presenting these alternatives we have oversimplified the situation. In theory at least no churches are concerned wholly with doctrinal correctness; none would make personal faith a matter of no importance. On the other hand, no church, however simple the tests it proposes, can be quite indifferent to the religious convictions of its members. As a result, both elements appear in the prevailing conceptions of membership and both find a place in the customary tests of membership. But the chief point to be made is this—that both conceptions cannot at the same time be controlling. In case of conflict, one must give way to the other. If they are to co-exist, one must be primary, the other secondary. As a matter of fact, every church makes its choice. Though concerned with both elements, it either insists upon doctrinal conformity at the risk of excluding those whose loyalty to Christ is genuine or it insists upon personal loyalty at the risk of including those whose doctrinal opinions are erroneous or inadequate. In any event, a risk is involved.

[5] Cf. Headlam, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

If such be the case, we are ready to approach the final problem as to what should be the attitude of our own Church toward the question of membership and what function, in consequence, should be assigned to the Apostles' Creed. It may be assumed that members of the Anglican Communion approach this problem under the influence of a strong tradition. According to that tradition, we view the Church as an organism and not as a sect. Our Church has stood in history, and stands today, for reconciliation and inclusiveness. True to our theory of the nature of the Church is our past and present practice. As a matter of plain fact, we do include, as in one family, the most diverse characteristics, the most varied temperaments, and the most lively intellectual differences. Holding such an ideal and living in a Church that embodies that ideal, familiar for centuries with the conception of an organism and with the experience of belonging to an organism, we ought to be prepared to interpret membership in organic terms.

If we interpret membership in organic terms, the requirement of membership will be the primitive requirement of "love for Christ showing itself in desire to belong to His Society." And if that is the requirement the test must be appropriate.

When we turn to the Office of Baptism, however, we shall find that the test is compliance with the following requirements:—a readiness to renounce evil and to obey God's will, and belief in all the *articles* of the Christian faith as contained in the Apostles' Creed. The only *obvious* reference to personal loyalty as essential to membership is in the words accompanying the act of baptism—"continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end." But it must be remembered that in its first rudimentary form the Creed was essentially a pledge of loyalty and a profession of discipleship and that such ought still to be its primary function. As we read in the recent Pastoral Letter of the House of Bishops, "A dis-

tinction is to be recognized (as in the Catechism) between the profession of our *belief in,* i.e., of entire surrender to, the Triune God, and the declaration that we *believe* certain facts about the operation of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. . . . The former is far more important as expressing our relation and attitude towards the Personal God." If the Creed were always offered and accepted in this spirit and in conformity with the original purpose of a baptismal confession, it could operate successfully as a test of fitness for organic membership. But emphasis in the Baptismal Office upon belief in all the *articles* of the Creed is a constant temptation to another use of the Creed, to its use as a standard by which to test the beliefs of the candidate without regard to whether the beliefs are inevitably implied in a genuine personal faith. It differs from a sectarian statement because it is more historical than doctrinal and because it emphasizes the religious beliefs common to nearly all Christian bodies. But it lends itself inevitably to use in the sectarian spirit by reason of the very fact that it has come to be a standard statement of beliefs used as a test of membership. Such a test, requiring the acceptance as true of a series of facts and doctrines, may serve in practice to admit the majority of those who are loyal to Christ and desire to be members of His Body; but it can so serve only to the extent to which loyalty and uniformity of opinion happen to coincide. Since the Apostles' Creed is relatively brief and simple and has long been subject to interpretation, the area of coincidence is reasonably wide. But we can no longer count upon complete coincidence, for the Creed, as we have said, has come to be not a simple test of Christian loyalty and Christian purpose, but a standard by which to test the beliefs of the candidate. It is proving increasingly ineffective as a unifying expression of the faith common to all loyal followers of Christ; and only so far as it is such a unifying expression can it usefully serve as a test of membership.

Applicants for membership can be found in growing numbers who gladly profess their devotion to a living Lord and their sincere desire to be grafted into His Body, but who cannot, without exercising to a dangerous degree their right of interpretation, affirm their belief in *all* the articles of the Creed. The number of such men and women is perfectly certain to increase with the years, and the Church must meet the situation created by those who combine with intellectual doubts a genuine religious faith. Since the use of strenuous interpretation can only be a temporary remedy, only two honest answers are ultimately possible. We can employ the Creed as an instrument of exclusion, and to those who profess their Christian loyalty and purpose we can say, "Your relation to Jesus Christ, your confidence in Him as Master and Saviour, your recognition of what He has done for you and of what He wants you to do for Him, your desire to serve Him in the fellowship of His Church—all these are matters of great importance. But they are not essential. The *essential* requirement is that you shall believe all the articles of the Apostles' Creed. Until you can assure us of such rectitude of belief, we can only suggest that you should serve Christ outside of our Church." But a Church which was ready to give that answer would no longer be a true Church. It would simply be a sect.

The only other answer is to find a simple test of personal faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour and of sincere desire to serve him in the body of His followers. It would take the form of a pledge of loyalty and service. To frame it in words and to incorporate it in the Office of Baptism is within the power of the Church; and in taking such action the Church would be true to its own ideal of membership in an organism. One possibility has already been suggested by Bishop Vincent of Southern Ohio, who offered at the General Convention of 1922 an amendment to the Baptismal Office to the effect that the statement of belief should read, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,

the Son of God." Another possibility is to utilize what the Catechism teaches us to be the essence of the Creed and to expect a confession in these words: I "believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world . . . in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind . . . in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the people of God." Whatever our final choice may be, we shall do well to bear in mind the words of Bishop Lawrence, "What right has any branch of the Catholic Church to set up a bar of entrance to the Church which is higher than that used by the apostles themselves?"

We are here directly concerned with the Creed only as a test of membership. But we shall conclude with a better understanding of the nature and value of the Creed if we add a word as to its proper place and use.

The Church is not merely interested in admitting new members and in providing a proper test for their admission. It is likewise concerned with teaching all its members, old and new. As an *ecclesia docens* it is responsible for developing and imparting Christian truth. Hence arises the essential importance of theology and doctrine in the life of the institution and in the lives of all its members. No word that has so far been said implies for a moment that a Church without dogma and doctrine and standards of belief is either possible or desirable. The Church as well as the individual must love God with the mind; and no fully rounded Christian life, corporate or single, can permit the activity of the emotions and the will to exclude the claims of the intellect. As a standard of belief possessed of immense historic and religious value, the Creed will continue to be a cherished possession of the Church. Its significance as a theological norm, as a compact body of Christian teaching, and as a symbol hallowed by centuries of tradition and devotion, remains unimpaired. But its future opportunity to serve a cause for which it is manifestly fitted will depend partly on our readiness to withdraw it from a service to which it is

no longer well adapted. As a summary of the Christian faith it is all too brief. Yet it includes more than may justly be required of him who seeks membership in the Church. Let all that it embodies of Christian truth—and more beside—become the possession of every member as, within the Christian fellowship, his experience deepens and his knowledge grows. But let it never stand between a follower of Christ and the fellowship of His Church.

FINIS

INDEX

Acts, Book of, 59
Alexander, of Alexandria, 98
Alexander, of Constantinople, 98
Allen, A. V. G., 134 *f.*; quoted, 34
Allen, W. C., 57 n.
Apocalypticism, meaning of, 108
Apollinaris, 19, 80 n.
Apostolical Constitutions, Creed of, 97
Arianism, 38, 70
Aristides, 53 n.
Arius, 16 *ff.*, 70
Articles of Religion, 47
Ascension, 9, 138, 144
Athenagoras, 107
Augustine, of Canterbury, 26

Baptism, 27
  creed in, 35 *f.*, 39, 148
  Roman rite, 43
Baruch, Apocalypse of, 108
Benedict VIII, Pope, 37
Bernon of Reichenau, 37
Bethune-Baker, J. F., 146, 154 n.
Bicknell, E. J., 76 n., 86 n., 91 n.
Bosanquet, B., quoted, 126
Breviary, 38
Burkitt, F. C., 57 n.
Burn, A. E., 19, 22n.
Burton, E. De W., 53 n.

Cæsarea, Creed of, 15 *ff.*, 34
Catechism, 147 *f.*
Celsus, 62
Cesarini, 12
Chalcedon, Council of, 20, 80 n.
Charlemagne, 12, 21, 30, 31, 37, 38
Charles, R. H., 98
China, Creed of Church of, 21
Christ, birth of, 51 *ff.*, 54, 60 *ff.*, 63, 141
  genealogy of, 56 *ff.*
Christ, personality of, 86 *ff.*
  sinlessness of, 81 *f.*
  teaching on resurrection, 109 *ff.*
Church, medieval, 48 *f.*
  in the New Testament, 153 *f.*
  as sect, 156 *f.*
  Anglican view of, 162
  as organism, Essay VII, *passim*
Clement of Rome, 27
Clergyman, ethical problem of, 134 *ff.*
Clough, A. H., quoted, 132
Cobb, W. F., 122
Common Understanding, test of, 143 *f.*
Communion of Saints, 12, 142
Constantine, 16
Constantinople, Council of, 20
Councils, authority of, 132
Creed, Apostles', 37, 38, 41, 42, 47, 50 *ff.*, 56, 63
  history of, 3–14
  text of, 3 n.
Creed of Aquileia, 3
Creed, Athanasian, 38, 98, 144
Creed of Cæsarea, 15 *ff.*, 34
Creed of Chinese Church, 21
Creed of Gaul, 12
Creed of Jerusalem, 15, 19, 34
Creed, Nicene (original), 11 *f.*, 80, 98
  history of, 14–22
  text of, 14 n.
Creed, Nicene (Nicæno-Constantinopolitan), 20 *ff.*, 34, 36, 37, 47, 80, 98
  in Spain, 21, 38
  proposed use, 42
Creed of North Africa, 10
Creed, Old Roman, 3 *ff.*, 9 *f.*, 12, 14, 35, 79
Creed of Salamis, 34

Creed of the Swedish National Church, 13, 21
Creeds, alternative use of, 40, 41
Creeds, permissive use of, 41, 42
Creeds, proper use of, 165 *ff.*
Crookes, Sir W., 119
Curtis, W. A., 150 n.
Cyril, of Jerusalem, 19 *f.*, 31, 32, 97

Daniel, Book of, 108
Dearmer, P., quoted, 42
Descent into Hell, 10 *ff.*, 144
Disciplina Arcani, 36
Docetism, 52, 146
Drown, E. S., 79 n., 91 n.
Du Bose, W. P., 86 n.
Duchesne, Mgr. L., 37, 41, 43

Edward VI, 31
Elizabeth, Queen, 31
Emmet, C. W., 131 n.
Epiphanius, 18 *f.*, 98
Eusebius of Cæsarea, 16 *f.*, 34

Ferrara, Council of, 12
Filioque, 21, 37
Foster, J., 117
Franks, 38

Gabriel, 55
Gallican Service Books, 38
Gee and Hardy, Documents, quoted, 27
Gelasian Sacramentary, 32
General accord, test of, 147
Gibson, E. C. S., 22 n.
Glazebrook, M. G., 138
Gore, Bishop, 77 n., 83 n., 86 n., 131, 138
  quoted, 69 n.
Gregory I, 26, 30, 40
Gregory VII, 30
Gregory Thaumaturgus, Creed of, 34

Hahn, A., quoted, 32
Hall, F. J., 75 n., 82 n., 83 n., 86 n., 155 n.
Handley, H., quoted, 128
Harris, C., 86 n., 103
Hartland, E. S., 54 n.
Headlam, A. C., 155 n., 161 n.
Hebrews, Epistle to, 59 *f.*
Henry II, Emperor, 37
Henson, Bishop, quoted, 135
Holy Communion, 27
Holy Spirit, 51 *ff.*, 55, 59, 61 *f.*, 132

Ignatius, 52 n., 53 n.
Incarnation, Essay IV, *passim*, 141, 146
Innocent III, 30
Interrogations, 32
Irenaeus, 5, 10 *f.*, 33, 97, 101–104, 107
Isaiah, 53, 54, 105

Jackson, F. J. F., 56 n.
Jackson, H. L., 147 n.
Jerusalem, Creed of, 15, 19, 34
John the Baptist, birth of, 55
John, Gospel of, 59 *f.*, 61 *f.*, 70, 78, 141
Joseph, 53, 56 *f.*, 58, 60 *ff.*, 63, 141
Justin Martyr, 9, 16, 27, 53, 57, 70 n., 99 *f.*
Justin II., 20

Kattenbusch, F. W. F., 52 n.
Kennedy, H. A. A., 111, 122
King's Book, 97

Lactantius, 107
Lake, K., 56 n.
  quoted, 146
Lawrence, Bishop, quoted, 165
Layman, ethical problem of, 133 *f.*
Leo III, Pope, 21, 37
Lewis, A. S., 57 n.
"Life Everlasting," in Apostles' Creed, 10 *f.*
Liturgies, Essay II, *passim*
  Byzantine, 28
  English, 29
  Gaul, 29
  Jerusalem, 28
  Rome, 29
  Spain, 29
  St. Mark, 28

Lock, W., 155 n.
Lodge, Sir O., 117, 122
Luke, Gospel of, 52 *f.*, 55 *f.*, 58, 60 *f.*, 70
Lyons and Vienne, letter of the Christians of, 107

Macedonius, 36
Macintyre, R. G., 122
Mackintosh, H. R., 76 n., 88 n.
Maclean, A. J., 41, 43
Major, H. D. A., 95
Marcellus, 4, 96
Mark, Gospel of, 59, 61
Mary, Virgin, 52 *ff.*, 58, 61 *f.*, 63, 141
Mass, Nicene Creed in, 37
Matthew, Gospel of, 52 *f.*, 56 *ff.*, 60 *f.*, 70
Maurice, F. D., 131
McComb, S., 122
McGiffert, A. C., 6, 22 n., 52 n.
Messiah, birth of, 53 *f.*, 56
Milan, Liturgy of, 39
Minucius Felix, 107
Moffatt, J., 56 n.
Mohammed, and Virgin Birth, 70
Momerie, A. W., 122
Moss, C. B., 75 n., 91 n.
Mozarabic Liturgy, 38

Neil and Willoughby, 43
New Prayer Book, quoted, 42
Nicæa, Council of, 16 *ff.*
Nicholas I, 21

Old Syriac Version of Gospels, 55 n., 56 n., 57
Ordinal, 47 *f.*
Ordination of Priests, 40
Origen, 9, 62, 98
Original meaning, test of, 141 *ff.*
Original purpose, test of, 146
Orr, J., 91 n.
Ottley, R. L., 134

Palmer, F., 60 n.
Parks, L., 150 n.
Pastoral Letter (1894), 142 *f.*
Pastoral Letter (1923), 125, 127, 139, 144, 162 *f.*
Paul, St., 141
  and Virgin Birth, 53, 59 *f.*, 61, 70, 78
  conception of Church, 154
  his doctrine of the resurrection, 111, 112, 113
  his idea of Christ, 58, 61
Paul of Samosata, 70
Pentecost, 155
Peter the Fuller, 36
Peter, Second Epistle of, 50 n.
Phœnix, legend of, 105
Photius, 21
Pirminius, 3
Plato, 101
Prayer Book, American, 13, 40
Prayer Book, English, 13, 42
Prestige, L., 91 n.
Procession of Holy Ghost, 19 *ff.*, 37
Proctor and Frere, 28, 30, 37, 43
  quoted, 29
Prophets, Hebrew, 52
Psalters, 38
Pseudo-Justin, 100
Psychical Research Society, 119
Pythagoras, 101

Quignon, Cardinal, Breviary of, 38

Rashdall, H., 126, 139, 145
Reformers, 49
Reserve, 139 *f.*
Resurrection, of the body, 13, 104, 113 *f.*, 117, 143, Essay IV, *passim*
  of the flesh, 9, 13, 97, 108, 143 146
  of Christ, 115 *f.*, 138, 144, 146
Richet, Charles, 119
Ritual, Jewish, 27
Robertson, J. H., 103 n.
Robinson, J. A., 76 n.
Rufinus, 3 *f.*, 10

Sacramentaries, 28 *f.*
Sacraments, defined organically, 156
Salamis, Creed of, 34

Sanday, W., 146 *f.*, 150 n.
quoted, 138
Sarapion, 28
Sarum Use, 29
Breviary, 38
Schrenck-Notzing, von, 119
Scientific spirit, 71 *f.*
Scott, C. A. A., 154 n.
Scriptures, precedence of over creeds, 47 *ff.*
and tradition, 48 *f.*
Anglican tradition concerning, 96
authority of, 132, 135
belief in, 138, 143 *f.*
Scrutinies, 35, 38
Second Coming of Christ, 138, 143
Sidgwick, H., 126
quoted, 131, 133, 145
Srawley, J. H., 43
Stone, D., 86 n.
Storr, V. F., 76 n., 91 n.
Strack, H. L., 63 n.
Streeter, B. H., 122
Swainson, C. H., 38
Sweden, National Church of, Creed of, 13, 21
Symbolic interpretation, 143 *f.*

Talmud, 62 n.
Te Deum, 149
Teaching of Twelve Apostles, 27
Temple, Archbishop, 131
Temple, William, 155 n.
Tertullian, 5, 9, 97, 105 *ff.*
Theodore the Reader, 36
Thirty-nine Articles, 141
Thomas Aquinas, 48
Thompson, T., 43
Timothy of Constantinople, 36
Toledoth Jeshu', 62 n.
Toledo, Council of, 21
Trent, Council of, 31
Turner, C. H., 32, 43, 80 n.
quoted, 31
Tutorial Prayer Book, quoted, 39
Tyrrell, G., quoted, 149

Unitarian statement (1924), 125, 143

Vincent, Bishop, quoted, 164
Virgin Birth, 8, 16, 18, 19, 54, 58 *f.*, 63, 138, 140 *f.*, 143 *ff.*, Essay IV, *passim; see* Christ, birth of
Visigoths, 38
Visitation of the Sick, Office for, 97
Von Soden, H., 56 n.

Walker, W. L., 91 n.
Wallace, A. R., 119
Westcott and Hort, 57 n.
Wettstein, J. J., 54 n.
Wilhelm and Scannell, 82 n.
Williams, N. P., 150 n.
Wood, T. C., 122
Woolley, R. M., 43
quoted, 27
Worcester, E., 122

Date Due

2/24/37

APR 22 1964

MAR 02 1970

90402

BX
5939
E64
L.90402
AUTHOR
Episcopal Theological school.
TITLE
Creeds and loyalty.

DATE LOANED	BORROWER'S NAME	DATE RETURNED
2/16/70	Bob Hamm	